

THE POWER OF PERSUASION:
ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN FREEDOM AND
PASTORAL COUNSELING

by

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To Grandma Beebe

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SPECIAL NOTE

I do not believe there has been an adequate solution to the pronoun problem, namely, the "he/she" issue. Use herein of the term "he" and its various case forms in reference to the minister or the counselee should be taken only in a generic sense. In many instances, I have tried to avoid masculine language forms in order to be more inclusive. However, I agree with the consensus of most authorities that the constant use of "he or she" is an alternative not conducive to forceful writing.

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ABSTRACT

This project attempts to understand how the minister can use the power of persuasion in pastoral counseling to enable growth toward self-actualization. The power of persuasion motif is dealt with as a psychological and theological issue involving human freedom. The minister has opportunities to utilize the dynamics of the power of persuasion (actualizing persuasion) to augment his effectiveness in pastoral counseling.

In psychology there is much insight to be gained in the analysis of the power of persuasion as it relates to human freedom. Persuasion has psychological dimensions that are both individual and social. People are affected by the hidden or subliminal persuasions in the environment, which, if unperceived, can act as determinants of behavior. Persuasion in pastoral counseling encourages the individual to find more inner direction and thus claim more freedom. Various styles of counseling, both (so-called) nondirective and directive, lend insight into the way in which persuasion can be employed to allow growth toward self-actualization.

In theology the Gospel of Freedom illumines the power of persuasion. Process theology, which is a theology of freedom, understands the modus operandi of God as being one of persuasive power. Divine persuasion is an actualizing persuasion, and human persuasion tends to be a manipulative persuasion. Traditional theology has generally looked upon God's activity in terms of coercion or, at best, the power of dissuasion. A theology of freedom clarifies the occasionally paradoxical notions of the power of persuasion in Christian faith. The paradoxes (i.e., strength in weakness, suffering in love, victory in defeat, and freedom in bondage) that were known

in Jesus Christ can be the powerful, persuasive forces in the pastoral counseling relationship. Jesus Christ exemplifies a life in the Spirit in which difficulties are transcended and the Gospel of Freedom proclaimed. The pastoral counseling encounter affords an opportunity for both minister and counselee to know the freedom of life in the Spirit.

The discipline of pastoral counseling seeks the integration of psychological and theological truths. The power of persuasion as it relates to human freedom can serve as one point of integration between the disciplines. The amplification of insight into the dynamics of the power of persuasion as it moves the counselee toward greater freedom is the purpose of this endeavor.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In pastoral counseling the power of persuasion can be utilized in constructive ways. There are psychological and theological implications to persuasion that can aid the minister, who too often tries to use purely secular psychological methods in counseling or else opts to stay only in the theological or spiritual realm. The problem is finding the necessary integration of disciplines in pastoral counseling. This paper contends that the Gospel of Freedom and a theology of freedom are congruent with the psychological goal of self-actualization. The minister in pastoral counseling can stimulate the counselee, through the power of persuasion, to grow in creative-responsive love and thus know greater amounts of personal freedom.

Much of humanistic psychology has arisen out of the values of the Christian faith. Today, however, the disciplines of psychology and theology are much independent of each other. More dialogue between the fields is necessary to a more wholistic approach to pastoral counseling. It is the position of this paper that integration on the issue of the power of persuasion in pastoral counseling can be fruitful.

Importance of the Problem

The topic of this project has profound implications regarding the life of the Church and the professional leadership in the Church. The contemporary parishioner is bombarded with tremendous persuasive forces: television, radio and the print media. Too often the individual is merely a pawn of cultural determinants, and he thereby fails to perceive the subliminal manipulation that influences

his lifestyle. There exists an illusion of freedom that becomes an opiate, stifling growth toward self-actualization. Manipulation is accomplished in such an efficient fashion because of the general failure to recognize the covert persuasions in the environment.

The parishioner, with this cultural background of manipulative persuasion, comes into the arena of the Church and on occasion into that segment of pastoral care called pastoral counseling. Unfortunately, the Church and sometimes the pastoral counselor do not exercise a liberating influence. Too often the Church or the minister becomes just one more of the manipulators of behavior. The question arises as to the mission of the Church in the context of persuasion: Can the Church be an emancipating body, delivering people from manipulative persuasion?

Pastoral counseling is one opportunity that a minister has to be a vehicle of the kerygma of the Gospel. The power of persuasion is utilized in its most creative way when the suffering love that was known in Jesus Christ becomes the redemptive force in the counseling relationship. Within the framework of pastoral counseling, one's faith can be strengthened in such a way that the manipulative influence of society is transcended, and genuine freedom found. Pastoral counseling can lead one in the direction of knowing a life in the Spirit so that personal growth in creative-responsive love is achieved.

It is important to note that the freedom an individual finds is always "limited" and "contingent," for freedom without limitations, or liberation removed from environmental contingencies, has no meaning. In its broad usage, the power of persuasion permeates all segments of existence. The hidden and overt persuasions of the environment can neither be ignored nor avoided completely. Individual free-

dom increases when the individual begins to choose from among the forces that would persuade him and then charts an individual and distinctive course. Effective pastoral counseling augments the self-determination of the parishioner so that he is no longer swayed simply by manipulative persuasion.

Thesis Statement

The thesis of this project is that a minister is in a strategic position to utilize the power of persuasion in pastoral counseling, enabling the counselee to move toward self-actualization. As he gains insight into both manipulative and actualizing form of persuasion and becomes more self-determinant, the counselee realizes greater amounts of personal freedom. Life in the Spirit becomes possible as he experiences transcendence and the persuasive power of the Gospel of Freedom. The understanding of persuasion has theological as well as psychological implications for both the counselee and the pastoral counselor. It is important that new symbols are developed for the process and goals of persuasion. The distinction between manipulative persuasion and actualizing persuasion will help to crystalize the divine and human efforts in the pastoral counseling encounter.

Pastoral counseling attempts the integration of psychology and theology, borrowing from both disciplines. Yet, it has emerged as a distinctive field in its own right. The minister can make use of the tools of actualizing persuasion in pastoral counseling. His understanding of the psychological and theological dimensions of persuasion will aid, it is hoped, the process of integration.

Pastoral counseling is enhanced when the minister, through his own comprehension of the power of persuasion, enables the counselee to realize self-actualization. The position of this paper is that genuine freedom, which is related to self-actualization, is possible in human existence. There is, however, a

gradation in the amount of freedom actually experienced by the individual: to whatever degree a person becomes self-determining, within the contingencies of the environment, he will experience a sense of self-actualizing freedom. Freedom can refer to one's ability not only to make choices and decisions independent of coercion but also to one's self-actualization and potential. The former will be referred to as "freedom of the will" (that is, freedom to make meaningful decisions) and is a necessary prerequisite to the power of persuasion. By using Everett Shostrom's system in relating to the issue of the power of persuasion, freedom of the will can be charted on a continuum or scale from "manipulative persuasion," at one end, to "actualizing persuasion" at the other end.¹ Manipulative persuasion requires the least amount of freedom of the will, and actualization persuasion requires the greatest amount of this freedom. Manipulative persuasion tends to be covert, or hidden, using subliminal techniques; it is an attempt to control another. In contrast, actualizing persuasion tends to be honest, or direct, with all parties fully conscious of what is occurring in the interaction. The elaboration of the particular distinctions between manipulative and actualizing persuasion will be dealt with in Chapter II of this project.

In order for there to be persuasion, there must be freedom of the will. Yet, there is no pure freedom of the will apart from the various contingencies in the environment that influence decision-making. Consequently, the individual is free insofar as he is given the deterministic influence; he is able to choose among the impinging forces. Often in manipulative persuasion, the forces are subconscious or subliminal. Nonetheless, they attempt to be coercive. To the extent that the indi-

¹ Everett L. Shostrom, Man the Manipulator (New York: Abingdon Press, 1967).

vidual has either a limited perception or no perception at all of the deterministic elements in the environment, freedom is relinquished.

In manipulative persuasion, the tendency to use coercive techniques increases steadfastly. To illustrate, a man holding a gun on a cashier at a drugstore and demanding money shows maximum use of manipulative persuasion in the situation. In the strict use of the term, coercion is not present until the gun is fired and the cashier shot. Obviously, the presence of the gun is highly persuasive in a manipulative sense, but the action itself is still in the realm of persuasion.² In this highly manipulative form of persuasion, the cashier does have options, although they are severely limited: surrender the money or be shot trying to resist. Each of the options appears unfavorable; the cashier has to choose the lesser of two evils. Assuredly, if a bystander managed to surprise and subdue the gunman, it would be a good thing, even though that act is of itself essentially coercive. It can be illustrated readily that in certain instances resorting to force or coercion can be a positive thing. Still, the application of coercion tends to increase in manipulative forms of persuasion and decrease in actualizing forms of persuasion.

Definition of Major Terms

Persuasion. The dictionary definition of the word suggests the influencing of a person to an action or belief by an overt appeal to his reason or emotion, after some coaxing, pleading, and/or arguing. To persuade is to cause to do something, especially by reasoning, urging, prevailing upon or inducement. Persuasion is per-

² John Cobb, "Major Christian Doctrines" Lecture at School of Theology at Claremont.

suading or being persuaded, or the power of persuading.³

In psychology the notion of persuasion is often discussed as motivational theory. Persuasion, when applied to advertising psychology, becomes motivational analysis or motivational research. It is related to drive or activation. This power of persuasion implies that the organism's actions are partly determined in direction and intensity by its own decision-making process.

In this project, persuasion is viewed from several different perspectives. Each usage of the word will be presented to establish the intended meaning. First, persuasion can be evident from its presence in a particular situation. This usage of the word implies persuasion simply as the contingencies that may affect behavior, i.e., what was it that persuaded you to make that decision? Second, persuasion is used sometimes to denote the intentional or unintentional luring of people to a particular action or position. This will be the most common usage of the word in this paper. Third, persuasion can be seen as the ability or potential of an individual to influence another person to develop a particular attitude or to act out a certain behavioral pattern. Fourth, in Whiteheadian philosophy or Process Theology, persuasion refers to the power of one actual entity to affect another actual entity. God persuades by introducing the relevant initial aim in each occasion. For Cobb, divine persuasion relates to God's "directivity."⁴

Power. Power is the ability to do, act or force; or the ability to affect

³Webster's New World Dictionary (New York: World Publishing, 1972).

⁴John B. Cobb, Jr., Theology and Pastoral Care (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), p. 47.

strongly; vigor, force; strength.⁵ It is the authority to sway or influence and, as such, the ability to control or encourage actualization in others.

Manipulation and Actualization. In Dunnam, Herbertson, and Shostrom's book, much of the discussion of manipulation and actualization is applicable to the motif of the power of persuasion:

Man is a manipulator. He is the creator and the perpetuator of a vast manipulative system. Manipulation has become the modus operandi of our modern civilization.... This is what a manipulator is: "One who exploits, uses, and/or controls himself and others as things or objects."⁶

Characteristic of manipulation are deception, control, unawareness, and cynicism.⁷ In contrast to manipulation is actualization:

An actualizing person is an individual who appreciates himself and others as persons of unique worth and potential.... Christian actualization is just that. It is a commitment to a style of life that purposely seeks to actualize one's true self, rather than to succumb to the phony roles of the manipulator.⁸

The primary characteristics of actualization are honesty, awareness, freedom, and trust.⁹ The power of persuasion can be juxtaposed onto this continuum of human behavior; persuasion that tends to express those qualities characteristic of the activity of a manipulator can be labeled manipulative persuasion. Likewise, persuasion that is similar to the activity of an actualizer can be called actualizing persuasion. It is

⁵Webster's New World Dictionary (New York: World Publishing, 1972).

⁶Maxie D. Dunnam, Gary J. Herbertson, and Everett L. Shostrom, The Manipulator and the Church, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), pp. 15-16.

⁷*Ibid.*, Ch. I.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

⁹*Ibid.*, Ch. I.

hoped that these categories will enable the various forms of the power of persuasion in pastoral counseling to come to light more clearly.

One of the major qualifications that the writer has concerning this system of manipulation versus actualization is that its view of man is inconsistent with human propensity for evil. Perhaps this is more the enterprise of the theologian or the wholistic pastoral counselor rather than the social scientist. Reinhold Niebuhr instructs that evil is also present in all of our attempts to do good; likewise, in all attempts at evil some good is present.¹⁰ The analogy is complete upon realizing that in all of the attempts at manipulation some actualizing tendencies are existent and vice versa.

Manipulative Persuasion. The intentional influencing of another person is an effort to control, use, or exploit. The person is seen merely as an object by which the persuader can achieve his own particular ends. An "It-it" relationship exists between the manipulative persuader and the individual or group that is the object of manipulation. The ends justify the means in manipulative persuasion, resulting in a generally dehumanizing encounter.

Actualizing Persuasion. The influencing of a person, as a product of an "I-thou" relationship, is resultant of persuasion which benefits both parties in the interaction. Pure actualizing persuasion can be understood as God's activity in the world. God's lure toward the highest possibilities in each actual occasion of existence would be illustrative of this form of persuasion. The nature of actualizing persuasion is such that many of the gimmicks and techniques of manipulative persuasion are avoided.

¹⁰ Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man, Vol. I (New York: Paulist Press, 1975).

Both nondirective and directive approaches to pastoral counseling are instructive for actualizing persuasion. The "client-centered" (Rodgerian) approach, various gestalt therapies, and reality therapy have their own techniques; they can be judged in the openness of the approach and the goal of self-actualization. The client in effective pastoral counseling is encouraged to transcend his situation and environmental contingencies. Actualizing persuasion is the ideal model for which pastoral counseling aims.

Freedom. In the first sense of this expression as used here, reference is made to the freedom that can be known in Christ and by a life in the Spirit. This freedom is congruent with freedom as self-actualization or the realization of growth in creative-responsive love.

Freedom of the Will. This phrase refers to freedom of choice between alternatives, or the ability to make decisions. It is self-determination of the individual. The person can decide to choose not merely a course of action without external coercion but one in accordance with the ideals or moral outlook he possesses. This freedom of the will requires exemption or liberation from the control of some other person or arbitrary power.

In a simple usage of the word freedom, freedom is that which is realized through self-actualization. Only when specifically referred to as the freedom of the will, will freedom be defined as merely choosing between alternatives.

Power of Dissuasion. This is the ability to turn from something by persuasion. It is to urge or advise (a person) against an action.

Coercion. This is the act or power of coercing; it is to restrain or constrain by force. In coercion, there is force, or compulsion, to do something.

Directivity. John Cobb's expression that refers to God's persuasion in the world:

The process of healing, growth and creative transformation as this works in individuals and in communities. This process directs us beyond our rational ability to project goals and purposes and it can be called directivity.¹¹

Pastoral Counseling. Pastoral counseling is a segment of pastoral care. According to Clinebell, "Pastoral counseling is the utilization by a minister of a one-to-one or small group relationship to help people handle their problems of living more adequately and to grow toward fulfilling their potentialities."¹² It may be suggested here that preaching is pastoral counseling on a group scale.

Hypnosis. "A sleeplike condition psychically induced usually by another person, in which the subject is in a state of altered consciousness and responds, with certain limitations, to suggestions of the hypnotist."¹³

Motivational Research or Motivational Analysis. A systematic and scientific analysis of the forces influencing people in order to control the making of their decisions; applied in advertising, marketing, and other related fields.

¹¹Cobb, Theology and Pastoral Care (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), from the cover.

¹²Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling (New York: Abingdon Press, 1966), p. 20.

¹³Webster's New World Dictionary (New York: World Publishing, 1972).

Work Previously Done in the Field

The integration of theology and psychology concerning the power of persuasion is important. The art of persuasion, in psychology, of both negative and positive forms has been highly developed; however, it comes not under the heading of persuasion so much as under motivation. The power of persuasion, as applied to the psychology of advertising, is seen as motivational analysis.

Traditionally, the power of persuasion in theology has been rather neglected. There is little room in orthodox theology for talking about the power of persuasion in relationship to an "omnipotent" God. In relatively recent years, process theologians have opened the door for theologically-centered discussions relating to both divine and human persuasion. The work of Alfred North Whitehead has had a great impact on process theologians concerning this topic.

Despite the development of the power of persuasion in these respective disciplines, little work has been done in terms of integrating the two, although pastoral counseling combines both psychology and theology, as they relate to pastoral counseling. Some help has come from figures in the psychology of religion, although their treatment of the subject has been minimal. The practical application of the power of persuasion far exceeds the psychological or theological understanding; moreover, frequently, the ethical dimensions involved in persuasion have been neglected. Part of the aim of this writer is to differentiate between positive and negative forms of the power of persuasion; between what is called herein manipulative persuasion and actualizing persuasion; between persuasion and coercion.

Scope and Limitations of the Project

To keep within the limits of a Doctor of Ministry project, discussion is confined to how the power of persuasion relates to pastoral counseling. Psychology and theology have contributed to much of the subject material, and yet the specific integration attempted here is, to personal knowledge, novel. The elaboration of the notion of freedom is also dealt with as a topic in psychology and theology, because it illuminates the meaning of the power of persuasion. Freedom of the will is necessary for persuasion to be authentic, and freedom as self-actualization is the process and aim of the power of actualizing persuasion.

Although there are many types of pastoral counseling, it is not possible to focus specifically on all of them in this paper. Since personal experience as a student chaplain and pastoral counselor has come out of a six-month tenure at the California Institute for Women at Frontera, many of the comments concerning persuasion will relate to this environment. This does not negate the application of the power of persuasion and, specifically, the power of actualizing persuasion to various forms of pastoral counseling. During the first three months, I worked full time at the Reception Center at C.I.W. and was engaged in extensive counseling. The next three months were spent on the main campus of the prison, where I was involved in several different types of pastoral counseling. The scope and limitations of this project are due, in part, to the scope and limitations of this clinical pastoral education experience.

The power of persuasion is in part contingent on the application of appropriate symbols in pastoral counseling. The motif of freedom was obviously a very powerful

one in this setting of incarceration and bondage.

This experience at C.I.W. was effected by involvement in both group and individual pastoral counseling. However, this paper will emphasize the one-to-one encounter, even though the application to group counseling may be similar.

Procedure for Integration

There remains a gap between the pastoral counselor's actual use of the techniques involved in the power of persuasion and his ability to reflect upon the existing practice. This project attempts to help advance the understanding of pastoral counseling in relationship to this disparity. Basically, the methodology employed is to use the research done in psychology, theology and pastoral counseling in such a way as to illuminate the subject. The field study experience at C.I.W. is drawn upon, as are several of the pastoral counseling sessions experienced in the prison setting. The library research involved books, periodicals and tapes related to the project.

In psychology, the material is drawn mainly from Skinner, May, Maslow, Rodgers, and Glasser. There are many other major figures in the field that deal with the power of persuasion, directly or indirectly; however, the chapter will be confined to these prominent figures.

Process theology is drawn upon with its basis in Whiteheadian philosophy. To a lesser degree, the power of persuasion relates to liberation theology and to a theology of relinquishment. The theologians addressed are Cobb, Whitehead, Williams, Niebuhr (Reinhold), Ford, Griffin, and others.

Several notable figures help in the integration of psychology and theology

concerning the power of persuasion. Allport, Cates, Frankl, Cobb, and Packard (social scientist) are the most prominent. Class experiences at the School of Theology at Claremont are drawn upon, and the assistances of John Cobb, my second reader Ignacio Castuera, and, particularly, the chairman of this project, Professor Paul Schurman. The information required for this paper has been obtained primarily through reviewing the applicable sources.

Chapter Outline

The relevance and importance of the project should be evident from the gap that exists between theology and psychology. The particular organization of this paper is an effort to help close this gap in relation to this topic. In order to make the discussion as precise as possible, a separate chapter is devoted to psychology (Chapter II) and another on theology (Chapter III). The integration is done in the fourth chapter. Finally, the conclusions and summary are brought forth in the fifth and last chapter. The organizational scheme of the project is as follows:

Chapter I, which is the present chapter, comprises the introduction.

Chapter II analyzes the psychological perspectives of the power of persuasion as it relates to the concept of freedom and also offers the continual application of the power of persuasion to pastoral counseling.

Chapter III presents the theological issues involving the power of persuasion as it involves human freedom and the Gospel of Freedom. The description of God's actualizing persuasion, as well as human persuasion (manipulative and actualizing) is sought.

Chapter IV attempts the difficult integration of the psychological

and theological dimensions of the power of persuasion as seen in pastoral counseling. It is hoped that this chapter will lend insight into the understanding of the independent discipline of pastoral counseling in relation to this topic, The relationship of the power of persuasion to conversion techniques and the media is also discussed.

Chapter V is the conclusion and summary of the research that has been undertaken in this project. The final articulation of the problem and its proposed resolution complete this doctoral project.

CHAPTER II

THE POWER OF PERSUASION AS IT RELATES TO PASTORAL COUNSELING AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN PSYCHOLOGY FOR HUMAN FREEDOM

It is the contention of this paper that the understanding of the power of persuasion is an aid to effective pastoral counseling. The persuasion power that affects the individual has consequences for personal freedom. Freedom is enhanced or diminished by the response to the forms of persuasion. The ability to transcend the power of persuasion is necessary for freedom of choice or freedom of the will. There are both manipulative and actualizing forms of persuasion.

The pastoral counselor makes use of the power of persuasion, in counseling, whether or not he is cognizant of it. This power can be demonic or an instrument of good. The pastoral counselor can increase effectiveness greatly, if he understands the dynamics involved in manipulative and actualizing persuasion and makes use of the techniques of the latter.

The pastor in counseling should evaluate not only the process but also the goals of persuasion. The question that must be entertained is, toward what end is the pastor persuading the counselee. Persuasion for what goal? Does the pastoral counselor try to persuade the counselee to accept the particular values and truths that he himself believes in? At what point is the pastor persuading or coercing the counselee toward realizing greater individual freedom and integrity? It is necessary to the creative utilization of the power of actualizing persuasion that, despite all the determining aspects of the environment, genuine freedom is possible. Both freedom

of the will and freedom as self-actualization and as life in the Spirit are necessary for actualizing persuasion to exist.

The focus of this chapter is to evaluate various authors in the field of psychology that deal directly or indirectly with the idea of the power of persuasion (i.e., Skinner, May, Rodgers, Maslow, and Glasser). Throughout the chapter are the definitions of freedom, power, actualizing persuasion, and the power of persuasion as they are dealt with by various schools of thought. Some critical reflection on the use of hypnosis (hypnotherapy) as a tool for the pastoral counselor is also formulated. Both nondirective and directive forms of therapy help in the determination of techniques of actualizing persuasion.

Beyond Freedom: Determinism

In order to give the necessary perspective in discussing the power of persuasion as it relates to freedom, it is good to begin with determinist B. F. Skinner. It is a personal contention that the deterministic powers in our environment often are dismissed too lightly in a way that hampers genuine freedom. Skinner affords an excellent description of the causal elements in the environment, although he goes too far in saying that there is no freedom.

From a behavioristic vantage point, Skinner argues that there is no real freedom apart from the contingencies of the environment. If there is any freedom of choice, it can be understood as a conditioned response or reflex response. An example of the former might be to break free from prison; the latter is evident in a person who sneezes and frees his respiratory system of an irritating agent.¹

¹ B. F. Skinner, Beyond Freedom and Dignity (New York: Knopf, 1971), p. 24.

Skinner talks about the "literature of freedom" and says that it is formulated to persuade or induce persons to escape from or to attack those who would control them oppressively. This literature consists of books, speeches and so forth that attempt to motivate people against their controlled environment. The effect, ironically, is to increase the pain and misery of the people that it is trying to free. The appeal in the literature of freedom is to the mind and the emotions rather than to the contingencies of reinforcement. "Freedom is a matter of the contingencies of reinforcement, not the feelings the contingencies generate."² If this theory is accepted, it has definite consequences in terms of pastoral counseling. The object of counseling is not to win greater amounts of freedom for the client, but rather to condition the counselee to make more appropriate responses to the environment.

The philosophy of behaviorist Skinner is partially illustrated in his quotation from the book Emile that, ironically, is written by one of the freedom writers, Jean Jacques Rousseau:

(Advice to Teachers)

Let the child believe that he is always in control, though it is always you the teacher who really controls. There is not subjugation so perfect as that which keeps the appearance of freedom, for in that way one captures volition itself. The poor baby, knowing nothing, able to do nothing, having learned nothing, is he not at your mercy? Can you not arrange everything in the world which surrounds him? Can you not influence him as you wish?³

It is a personal contention that, despite the would-be determinants of behavior, one can find a degree of liberation by exercising freedom of choice. Still, Skinner rightfully has demonstrated the profound effect that heredity and particularly

²Ibid., p. 35.

³Ibid., p. 37.

the environment have upon behavior. A third factor should be introduced, however, namely, the autonomy of the self as a determinant of behavior. The individual can choose and decide the various contingencies that influence him.

B. F. Skinner points out that those who violently object to any sort of manipulation of behavior, nevertheless, make strong efforts to manipulate minds. It is the altering of environmental contingencies that causes the change of mind. Whenever we urge or persuade, we point to positive consequences that act as reinforcement for a particular way of thinking or acting. While there is no way to avoid all forms of persuasion, there are many ways that an individual can determine the forms of persuasion that will act upon him.

Despite its limitations, this deterministic model has implications in terms of so-called nondirective therapy or client-centered pastoral counseling. Skinner argues that if the therapist does not direct the client then he is only allowing the outside forces or contingencies to play upon him. These contingencies act as determining factors and may be governmental, educational, ethnical, religious, or others. The so-called nondirective therapist nevertheless is influencing the behavior of the client. In nondirective therapy, the therapist supposedly cares about the person he is seeing and responds in sensitive empathy. This has the effect of reinforcing any behavior that the client happens to be expressing. Skinner asserts, "The fundamental mistake made by all those who choose weak methods of control (so-called nondirective therapy) is to assume that the balance of control is left to the individual, when, in fact, it is left to other conditions."⁴

⁴Ibid., pp. 93-94.

The Values and the Limitations of
Behaviorism: Self-determination

Skinner denies that there is freedom of the will and, consequently, in his system, there can be no freedom in terms of self-actualization. If neither of these types of freedom exist, mankind indeed has no dignity, as suggested by Skinner's title Beyond Freedom and Dignity. In this section, it is argued that genuine freedom exists in the human condition and that, despite the behavioristic contention, the so-called nondirective therapy or nondirective pastoral counseling can be, in effect, the most powerful form of persuasion. The individual is encouraged to choose responsibly, thereby claiming a measure of self-determination in the face of all the contingencies of the environment. It is through insight into the determinant factors which influence decisions that real choice is achieved. If a person is completely oblivious to the contingencies in his environment that strive to determine his behavior, then little genuine freedom can be utilized. Freedom is dependent upon awareness of the various forms of persuasion, both manipulative and actualizing, which lure the individual to respond.

In the behaviorist model, people are completely at the mercy of past conditioning and present environment. It is in this scheme that freedom of choice is largely an illusion. Paradoxically, the proponents of this motif, Skinner and Watson, have emphasized the potential use of technology for developing a better society, as if people were capable of choosing to use this potential in a particular way -- as if there were actually freedom of choice.

These behaviorists fail to take into account the subjective experience of people. Their theory is based on a simplistic, stimulus-response model, and

it too easily translates research done on laboratory animals (e.g., white rats) to the human arena. Skinner fails to see the ingrained tension of human existence, and he tries to resolve it by explaining behavior through causal factors in the environment.

James Woelfel, in discussing the implications of Skinner's theories, suggests some of the weaknesses.

As for Skinner's contemporary naturalistic determinism, many natural scientists would simply deny that the deterministic hypothesis is absolutely necessary to scientific inquiry. They would point to the indeterminacy principle in physics, which establishes at least the possibility that scientific theory may have to adapt itself in some areas to phenomena that are insufficiently determined by general laws. Some scientists engaged in biological study of human behavior would go on to say that a strictly determinist theory is not adequate to explain the nature and complexity of data such as self-awareness, self-criticism, symbolization and choice-making.⁵

In criticizing Skinner's determinism, it is far too easy to bypass the significant values of his approach. The naive belief in freedom as ungraded or entropic choice is demolished in understanding the basic tenets of his theories. Woelfel is especially sensitive to the values as well as the limitations of Skinner's behaviorism.

Skinner's challenge to the defenders of human freedom is one of his most important and useful contributions. There is still far too much unwarranted confidence, careless equivocation, unexamined assumption and plain self-deception in our talk of personal liberty. Skinner forces us to face up to the formidable reality of genetic-environmental conditioning, the elusive nature of freedom, and the far-reaching ethical, social and theological implications of such data.⁶

The effective use of the power of persuasion by the minister in counseling is not accomplished by a denial of genetic-environmental conditioning but through perception and acceptance concerning its influence. The power of actualizing persuasion

⁵James Woelfel, "Listening to B. F. Skinner," The Christian Century, (November 30, 1977), 1115.

⁶Ibid.

comes when the counselee lays claim to the freedom of the will that allows authentic decision-making within the environmental contingencies.

All therapy uses persuasion. The question is not whether persuasion is present, but the quality and form of the persuasion. In fact, so-called nondirective therapy directs, but it does so toward achieving individual responsibility.

Actualizing persuasion may certainly be directive but in keeping with the client's own volition. In actualizing persuasion the possibility of the counselee making a wrong choice or a poor decision is present, and the pastoral counselor should allow the counselee to take responsibility for the consequences. However, in crisis counseling, the actualizing counselor properly may assist the client's decisions and yet keep the bent of actualizing therapy with the counselee.

There is no completely nondirective therapy. Skinner rightfully labels nondirective therapy as a "weak" form of counseling. However, he fails to see the paradoxical power that can arise out of such weakness. Persuasion in this form can augment responsibility and a propensity toward self-actualization. Personal strength can indeed arise out of a "weak" therapy that focuses on the client's ability to act responsibly. The autonomy of the client can be increased by the counselor's refusal to manipulate behavioral patterns. Directives may assist the counselee in following his or her intentions without replacing the client's responsibility for decisions.

In contrast to B. F. Skinner, Rollo May, takes a moderate position on the issue of freedom and thus opens the door for actualizing persuasion. May contends that alternatives of being purely free or purely determined are false notions and stem from an arrogant refusal to accept the human dilemma. These two categories are said to be analogous to the capacity of the human being to experience himself as both sub-

ject and object. When an individual tries to be pure subject, the unrealistic idea of pure freedom is sought. In contrast, when one seeks to be pure object, the notion of pure determination surfaces. Genuine freedom lies in the human capacity to live in the dialectical relationship between these two extremes.⁷

May comments concerning the error in the therapist, assuming that there is total freedom in counseling by the counselor, stating no values or biases:

For no matter how much the therapist or counselor might protest that he assumed no values in his practice, the patient or counselee knew, even if he did not dare to express his knowledge, that the protestation was not true; and that the therapist was smuggling in his own values the more perniciously in the very fact of not admitting them.⁸

The power of persuasion is existent in the counseling situation, whether or not the counselor owns up to the forms of persuasion that he is implementing. When persuasion is basically covert, it becomes manipulative and does not move the individual toward responsibility and freedom. The ability to transcend the environment is a necessary ingredient to freedom. If the forms of persuasion remain hidden, then the individual's capacity to transcend them is impaired. May contends, "Mental health, in my judgment, is on the opposite side of the spectrum from 'conditioning and control.' The progress of therapy can be measured in terms of the progress of 'consciousness of freedom.'"⁹ In contrast to this statement, it should be argued that mental health can be achieved by appropriately choosing, through the "consciousness of freedom" and through the process of actualizing persuasion, the forms of con-

⁷Rollo May, Psychology and the Human Dilemma (New York: Litton Educational Publishing, 1967), p. 9.

⁸Ibid., pp. 169-170.

⁹Ibid., p. 174

trol and conditioning that one values. It appears that May is too quick to discard any technique in counseling, or elsewhere, that smacks of determinism. He fails to see that some actualizing techniques of persuasion can be very directive. At times, the use of hypnosis can be beneficial in therapy; yet, he quickly passes judgment on it. Hypnosis is often characterized as only manipulative, and its positive values often are ignored by traditional, especially Freudian, therapists.

Another example of positive forms of therapy using actualizing persuasion may be seen in William Glasser's book, Positive Addiction; the concept of controlled behavior in the form of a positive addiction to such a thing as long-distance running is seen as beneficial to the psyche. After about an hour of running, the runner experiences a type of transcendence in which he can no longer feel the pain in his body, and his mind "spins free."¹⁰ Other forms of positive addiction can come in meditation or any activity done for approximately one hour per day. The modern mind, with a naive sense of the meaning of freedom (unhibited or criterionless choice), tends to underestimate the hidden force of persuasion in the environment. At this point, Skinner's analysis is helpful in demonstrating the powerful contingencies in the environment that affect behavior. Even with such understanding, all forms of persuasion are not avoided; rather, the persuasion that brings the greatest degree of freedom is sought, i.e., actualizing persuasion.

Power and Persuasion

In the same way that an adequate assessment of freedom is a necessary prerequisite to the understanding of the power of persuasion, the defining of power

¹⁰William Glasser, Positive Addiction. (New York: Harper & Row, 1976).

is helpful in evaluating the forms of persuasion. Rollo May defines power as the ability to cause or prevent change. Power is seen as necessary to love, and, to various degrees, love is present in the form of power. May cites five types of power: The first is exploitative power, the destructive power that identifies itself with force; slavery is the most obvious example of this form of power. The second is manipulative power which exerts itself over another; some of Skinner's operant conditioning techniques would be included here. The third is competitive power, which is power against or in opposition to the other; sports competition would come under this heading. The fourth is nutrient power, which is exemplified in parental concern for children. The final category is integrative power, i.e., power exerted with the other person; the nonviolent techniques of Martin Luther King and Gandhi illustrate this form of power. Love is present in ascending order on this scale, so that integrative power embodies the greatest amount of love and exploitative power the least.¹¹ A parallel exists between integrative power and Whitehead's notion of beauty, which is explored in Chapter IV.

Power is the energy or potential energy to make things happen in such a way that an effect can be produced. May's categories, describing the types of power, are helpful in dispelling the notion that all forms of power are somehow negative and thereby must result in aggression and victimization. Power is seen as basic to life and necessary to all self-esteem, self-assertion, and personal significance. There is a fundamental relationship between power and persuasion. In order for there to be persuasion, there must be power in the grasp of both the persuader and the

¹¹ Rollo May, Power and Innocence (New York: Dell, 1972), pp. 105-119.

persuaded. In contrast to persuasion, coercion occurs when only the party coercing has controlling power. In coercion there is a domination of the other, and individual will is nullified. If the coerced have any power at all, it is stifled when coercion is present. Paradoxically, the power of persuasion is, in a fundamental way, more powerful than the power of coercion. In persuasion, an individual's inner drive or motivation can be affected and changed, whereas in coercion, the restraining force must always be present to determine behavior. Motivation that results from the power of persuasion, especially actualizing persuasion, influences the person's inner activation or drive. There can be no pure line drawn between the power of persuasion and the power of coercion, for in varying degrees both modes of power can be present in each situation. Coercion can be present in both manipulative and actualizing persuasion. An example might be a parent who forces a child to get away from an approaching car; the child may resist the parent, but the consequences would be dire. In this instance, there would be a blend of actualizing persuasion and coercion.

In the field of pastoral counseling, the pastor has a great deal of persuasive power at his disposal. The counselee often comes into counseling in a state of heightened suggestibility. In nondirective counseling or in Rodgerian "client-centered" counseling, the counselor allows the client to develop his own decision-making ability by the counselor's listening reflectively to the problem.¹² The client-centered approach encourages the counselor to be with and to share his own feelings with the counselee. The sessions involve more of a two-way encounter

¹²Carl Rogers, Counseling and Psychotherapy (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1942).

than found in a more nondirective style. The power in this "client-centered" approach is that the person's inner motivation or activation is accentuated.

It seems that pastoral counselors schooled in so-called nondirective counseling err in trying to avoid completely the nudge toward growth in the client for fear that some form of manipulation may be involved. There are times in counseling when the counselor ventures forth and trusts his hunches in a way that may persuade the client toward knowing more personal growth. Always the problem is that the counselor simply may be reading himself into the client's situation and manipulating a response that the client has not chosen. This is a continual and healthy anxiety for the pastoral counselor to have in order to guard against manipulation. It is important that the counselor keep this anxiety and thus avoid pushing or persuading the counselee into a decision that has not arisen basically out of the counselee's own volition and decision-making faculties.

Hypnosis and the Power of Persuasion

Once a client has chosen a particular course of action, the counselor can be more affirmative in using the various techniques of persuasion to reinforce the decision. The use of positive imagery and/or hypnosis can be a valuable tool for the minister or counselor. In the various forms of so-called nondirective counseling the power of persuasion, not unlike the hypnoidal stage in hypnosis, is being utilized. The counselor, in being an emotional mirror for the client, often persuades in the direction of an emotional catharsis.

The power of suggestion or persuasion in the form of hypnosis is a fascinating aspect of the field of pastoral counseling. If one understands hypnosis, using

Andrew Salter's definition, as simply a conditioned reflex,¹³ then one relationship that it has to so-called nondirective counseling becomes apparent. According to Salter, the words of the hypnotist create a certain conditioned response in the subject. For instance, if the hypnotist says the word "sleep" over and over, the subject will often respond in keeping with his prior conditioning and assume a sleeplike state. Likewise, if in pastoral counseling the minister perceives that the counselee is holding in a lot of pain and then simply makes the statement, "I experience your feeling a lot of pain," it will often have the effect of bringing out an emotional catharsis in the client. The suggestion of the word "pain" encourages the expression of the partially-conditioned feeling or response of pain.

Hypnosis can be used also in a technique called positive reinforcement through time projection. This is a unique approach in counseling that was developed by Lazarus. The client is hypnotized and asked to project into the future twenty-four hours, then maybe forty-eight hours, all the way up to six months ahead of the present. The problem is reflected upon at each projection, and the client is thereby allowed to gain some perspective on the particular difficulty he is trying to overcome.¹⁴ Hypnosis also may be used to enable the client to gain insight into the root of the present problem. Another technique of hypnosis is regression. In the hypnotic trance, the client is able, in effect, to relive the experiences of the past. It would be possible through positive imagery in hypnosis to reverse Lazarus' technique, caus-

¹³ Andrew Salter, What Is Hypnosis? (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973), p. 10.

¹⁴ James C. Coleman, Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1972), p. 670.

ing the individual to experience a new perspective on a past occurrence. Through this form of persuasion, the client may remove an emotional blindspot or an emotional hurt that is thwarting growth in his life.

Hypnosis has been long under the category of magic or witchcraft; today it is accepted as a useful tool in psychology and medicine. There is a growing number of pastoral counselors who are able to capitalize on the use of hypnosis to augment their effectiveness. All hypnosis is self-hypnosis in the sense that the hypnotist is only the operator that facilitates a person's creating his or her own trance. Hypnosis is a gateway to the unconscious, and to the extent that the unconscious influences behavior, hypnosis can be a very potent and powerful form of persuasion. The danger of hypnosis seems to be evident in the potential the hypnotist has to reinforce forms of behavior arising out of the motivation of the hypnotist rather than the chosen goals of the hypnotized. However, if the hypnotist is sensitive to the client's own self-direction, then positive results can be achieved with this form of persuasion.

Pastoral Counseling: Verbatim

The pastoral counselor occasionally makes use of the power of persuasion through using the techniques of hypnosis and also by simply trusting the perceptions and insights that occur to him, sharing them with the client. Personal experience with pastoral counseling is centered around two quarters of Clinical Pastoral Education work at the California Institute for Women at Frontera. Integration of both theology and counseling were allowed through student chaplaincy. The following session is an example of a client-centered approach that is more than simply reflecting. Several years back, the woman tragically had killed her son with a shotgun in

an attempt to murder her husband. This was one of several encounters with her:

Chaplain Beebe: Forgiving yourself is the hardest part. (At this point, I was feeling that R. was really kicking herself, and something in me did not want her to do that.)

Resident: I don't know, but it seems like the more that I think about it, the more depressed I seem to get. I think that I have somewhat improved, but it hits me every once in a while. (Pause.) I think I would go insane except for my kids on the outside, and they are my only real motivation for getting out of here. Otherwise, I think that I would just as soon stay here for good.

Chaplain Beebe: When you think of your kids, that holds you together. (Here, I felt a little pressed for time, knowing that in about five or ten minutes she will have to go to her room for count. I did not want our session to leave her more inside herself and more depressed, so I wanted to venture somewhat out of my reflective listening.) R., a lot of things seem to be stirring inside of you; and yet, one thing that I am really sensing is that your son is still with you in a real way. The love that you have for him has not died.

Resident: Yeah. You know, I have thought about that a lot, and that is true. Our love is still present, but sometimes it's just so hard.

Chaplain Beebe: Really hard. Hey, but you know, R., something inside me says that if I was your son, I would be saying, "Hey, Mommy, stop punishing yourself. Mommy, be happy."

Resident: (Crying. I reached out and touched her hand and stayed with her for a few minutes.)

Chaplain Beebe: R., it's time to go now for count. If you would like, we can set up some time later on.

Resident: Thanks, Jim. It helps sometimes to be able to deal with what is going on inside. I'll talk to you later.

The rapport that had been achieved with this woman made the risk taken in identifying with the son she had accidentally killed persuasively powerful. There is a real sense in which the effect on a client is not really known, but to risk trusting hunches and to suffer in love with the other person is the power of persuasion significantly at work.

Actualizing Persuasion

The question as to what is the process and goal of the power of actualizing persuasion can be dealt with in part by understanding Abraham H. Maslow's concept of self-actualization. Rather than taking the models of neurotic or sick people as a starting point, Maslow presents models for health. He cites examples of people who are self-actualized. This self-actualization is a basic need in people. Maslow says that the term was first coined by Goldstein:

It refers to man's desire for self-fulfillment, namely, to the tendency for him to become actualized in what he is potentially. This tendency might be phrased as the desire to become more and more what one idiosyncratically is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming.¹⁵

Self-actualizing may be part of not only the process but also the goal in the power of persuasion, and it is dependent on the person's independence of the physical and social environment. These people are not primarily motivated by deficiency goals but, rather, by growth goals. In the face of deprivation or hardship, the self-actualized person is affected less than the normal person because he is relatively independent of his environment. He is an inner-directed individual rather than an outer-directed individual.

Maslow contends that the distinction to be made between the good life that Aristotle envisioned and the visions of many modern-day psychologists is that, in the contemporary view, people are seen not only for what they are but also for what they can become. This means not only present realities or actualities are envisioned but also the future possibilities. From Maslow's framework, it is only when these natural

¹⁵ Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 46.

drives are thwarted, often as a result of deprivation of love in the early years, that the drive toward self-actualization does not manifest itself.¹⁶

Maslow has an understanding of freedom which recognizes that it is not an all-or-nothing package. The more one self-actualizes his potential and becomes whole, the more freedom can be experienced. There is a gradation in the amount of freedom that is part of the individual's life. If basic need gratifications are not satisfied, especially in the early stages of life, then the deterministic factors in the environment play a dominant role. Paradoxically, the more the various need gratifications are fulfilled in self-actualized individuals, the less dependent these people are on the love and affirmation of the other. The focus of therapy is to persuade the client to find constructive ways to fulfill the basic psychological needs. Having satisfied these needs, the individual becomes less dependent on them and thereby begins to self-actualize his potential creatively.

This vision of self-actualization is an extremely insightful model by which to persuade clients. When applying this model to wholistic pastoral counseling, it is necessary to recognize more adequately the problem of evil. People have great potentiality for distorting the good that is more than simply the result of not having the various need gratifications satisfied. Maslow's model seems optimistic, and yet the effect of having a model for health, a model of self-actualization, is invaluable in encouraging people to fulfill some of their potentials. In his definition, Maslow still seems to suggest it is feasible for a person to self-actualize all of his potentials. This appears unrealistic in recognition of the fact that the realization or actualiza-

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 271-275.

tion of one potential implies that some sort of conscious or unconscious choice has been made not to actualize a different potential. Overall, Maslow's model of self-actualization is a viable model toward which the power of persuasion can aim itself. The description that Maslow gives to these self-actualized individuals should not be taken as absolute but as suggestive. It may even be that a truly self-actualized person would not even be described as self-actualized in Maslow's examples. The point is that each client and each pastoral counselor should develop some sort of model of self-actualization for himself and should use the power of persuasion to enable others to create their own.

Reality Therapy and Actualizing Persuasion

One particular therapy that uses a relatively direct approach to produce behavioral change is reality therapy. Its emphasis on responsibility presupposes a degree of human freedom. This approach was developed by William Glasser in order to give effective treatment to seriously delinquent adolescent girls. With apparent effectiveness, Glasser uses what he ventures to call the psychiatric version of the three R's, namely, reality, responsibility, and right-and-wrong.¹⁷ The counselor seeks to persuade the counselee to behave more responsibly. Traditional labels of "sick" people are avoided as much as possible. Categories like neurosis and psychosis serve to give people psychological reasons for acting irresponsibly.

Several of Glasser's reality therapy principles seem valuable as techniques for

¹⁷William Glasser, Reality Therapy (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p. xii.

actualizing persuasion in pastoral counseling. Once it is determined what direction the counselee wants to pursue, techniques of this therapy can motivate the person to take the responsible course of action. To achieve self-actualization, the emphasis on responsibility is aimed at helping the counselee to fulfill two basic psychological needs: "... the need to love and be loved and the need to feel that we are worthwhile to ourselves and to others."¹⁸

There appears to be a danger in reality therapy that needs to be averted. In encouraging people to "conform" and "act responsibly," the counselor may be moving the counselee in a direction opposite of actualization, if the environment of the person is basically corrupt. The responsible counselor is caught in something of a double-bind when he becomes aware that the system or organization in which the counselee is involved is oppressive. The tendency is present in reality therapy to smooth over difficulties that people are having with faulty systems and simply to encourage conformity to the status quo. It is true that the counselor in this double-bind might not be able to start a revolution or systemic institutional change in the situation any more than the counselee. Yet, the more responsible course for the counselee to take might be to oppose the system or leave the environment. The counselor in this problematical situation may aim at the goal of simply helping the counselee survive a bad situation (especially if it is a prison he cannot leave). The pastoral counselor may be in a strategic position to help the person examine possible alternatives which suggest responsible courses other than blindly conforming to the oppressive system.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 9-10.

It seems that Glasser has somewhat the same orientation toward "reality" that Skinner espouses in his behaviorism. "Reality" or the "contingencies of the environment" are understood in static rather than dynamic terms. In actuality, reality became reality, in part, due to the determination and decision-making processes of individuals. In like fashion, the reality of the future will be determined somewhat by the behavioral responses that one makes in the present. In the systems of Glasser and Skinner, the assumption is that reality is the known, and the counselee responds to that reality. By contrast, in actualizing persuasion the counselee is seen as an agent affecting reality. Reality is recognized as being in flux which changes in relationship to human response.

In a more positive vein, reality therapy makes significant contributions to the field of therapy and indirectly to pastoral counseling. The therapist is encouraged to spell out the particular values in which he believes. The counselor-client relationship is seen as a give-and-take encounter in which both parties must become emotionally involved.

In referring to the therapist, Glasser says, "To some extent he must be affected by the patient and his problems and even suffer with him.... Attaining involvement is the essence of therapy."¹⁹ The aloof, objective therapist who is unaffected by the pain and suffering of the counselee cannot be an effective therapist.

In reality therapy, the counselor is not reluctant to question the right or wrong of a particular action. This encouragement of values clarification is paramount to the process of actualizing persuasion. The reality therapist may ask, "Are you tak-

¹⁹Ibid., p. 28.

ing the responsible course?" In psychiatric treatment, strengthening the patient's recognition that his present behavior is wrong or irresponsible is a powerful motivation toward positive change.²⁰

Freedom in Bondage

At the California Institution for Women at Frontera, the student chaplains were often put in a double-bind in counseling the women. Many women who adapt to the system become "institutionalized" (that is, they become dependent upon the system) and end up returning. In some instances, women have actually tried to escape in order to get two more years added to their sentence. The counselor in this environment tries to help the prisoner (or resident) cope and act responsibly but not so the prison environment is the only one to which she can aspire. Here, it seems that there is almost a healthy amount of discontent and lack of adjustment. What is seen from an institutional framework as irresponsible behavior may indeed be personally responsible. Many women in the Reception Center were put in a kind of double-bind regarding their behavior. If they mingled with the crowd, they risked getting into trouble. By the same token, if they stayed to themselves, they were seen by the administration as not properly adjusting to the Center.

Reality therapy requires clear rules for responsible behavior in a given environment, that is, what is responsible behavior and what is not. In this therapy, unlike in traditional therapy, the counselor is able to take the role as teacher. Conventional therapy limits teaching to the understanding of the conscious and un-

²⁰Ibid., p. 71.

conscious determinants of behavior. By contrast, reality therapy does not seek insights but teaches the counselees better or more effective methods of fulfilling their needs. Responsible behavior is the goal of this therapy.

The positive emphasis on behavior change is worthwhile in reality therapy. Assuredly, avoiding insight and the questions regarding determinants negatively affects a person's ability to actualize. Actualizing persuasion demands that a person be able to transcend his environmental contingencies in order to find real freedom. However, it is true that, particularly in crisis situations, the more directive role of a counselor is readily justified. A certain degree of coping is necessary for the process of actualization to begin.

Glasser clarifies his position in this statement:

"... in other words, it's not 'insight,' 'understanding,' and 'freedom' that the neurotic needs but commitment. In the words of an old hymn our petition can appropriately be: 'Holy Spirit, Right Divine, Truth within my conscience reign, Be my King that I may be, firmly bound, forever free.'"²¹

In traditional Freudian therapy, the goal is insight into the cultural and environmental contingencies which form the root of the problem. Usually, the emphasis is in the past. It is assumed that once the counselee gains insight into the psychological problem, then behavioral change will follow. Unfortunately, this does not always happen. On occasion, one may have profound insight but no behavioral change. In contrast to this theory, reality therapy proposes that insight into the problem only gives the counselee further rationale for acting irresponsibly. Once the behavior is changed, the person will also have a different, subjective and psychological experience.

²¹ Ibid., p. xvii.

This paper proposes that a pastoral counselor in using the power of actualizing persuasion can use aspects of both theories to advantage. The problem with reality therapy is that it fails to encourage insight. It assumes that the counselor will have the insight but that the counselee cannot really be trusted with it. If the counselee is denied insight, or if it is suppressed, his capacity to transcend his situation and find genuine freedom for himself is also impeded. Freedom comes in bondage to the truth. Concentrating only on the behavior does not move a person toward self-actualization. Among the incarcerated women at C. I. W. who were in bondage, literally only those who had insight and transcendence seemed to experience freedom.

In traditional therapy, the benefits of insight are recognized, but the emphasis is yet too much on the past. In addition, realistic behavioral change techniques are not used effectively. The counselee is not helped to move responsibly toward the actualization of that insight. The use of behavioral modification techniques, along with insight and other methods that encourage responsibility, would be more in line with actualizing persuasion as proposed in this project.

CHAPTER III

PASTORAL COUNSELING THROUGH THE POWER OF PERSUASION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR A THEOLOGY OF FREEDOM

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the theological implications involved in the power of persuasion. The analysis of the power of persuasion will involve the way in which God persuades and, to a lesser extent, the way in which the pastor as counselor can persuade. Whitehead takes the position that God is a God of persuasive power. Lowe aptly presents Whitehead's position:

Whitehead was convinced that the finer religious insight sees the divine agency in the universe as persuasive, not coercive; persuading by the attraction of the ideals, the new possibilities of value, which it offers to the finite individuals of the world as each of them rising into being, makes the final determination of its character, and so of what it offers to the future. In this way God, and the environment consisting of the totality of already completed finite processes, together make up the infinite background from which a new event emerges.¹

Basically, this paper is in agreement with Whitehead's position regarding divine persuasion. However, unlimited persuasive power is consistent with limited coercive power. It is from a Biblical standpoint that this position, that the divine power is not only one of persuasion but also of limited coercion, is explored herein. Particular attention is paid to the persuasion that is found in suffering love and the freedom of the will that enables people either to accept or to reject the persuasion of love. The ramifications that this theological position (God's persuasion, i.e.,

¹Victor Lowe, Understanding Whitehead (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1962), p. 25.

suffering love) has for the art of pastoral counseling and social praxis are discussed also.

Comments herein, it should be noted, are heavily influenced by the writings of Whitehead, Cobb, Williams, Ford, (Reinhold) Niebuhr, Tillich, and to some extent, the liberation theologians.

In traditional theism, there is little room, if any, for talking about the power of humans in relationship to God. In traditional images, God has all the power; He is omnipotent. There is not much to be gained in talking about the persuasion of God in this scheme, because whatever comprises the past, present, and future is the Will of God. Thus, the meaning of God's power or His ability to persuade is moot, if there is no power or persuasion outside of God. The question arises: Is power really power if there is no lesser power over which it exerts itself?

In process theology, there is less an impasse in regard to this question. God does not have all the power; rather, the Creation has significant and meaningful power. The power of God is not to manipulate, force or coerce entities to follow His will; instead, God persuades, in each situation, by offering the highest possibility or value as an aim to be realized or actualized. God introduces novelty and creativity in each new situation as an option to be accepted or rejected. In each event, God lures each being toward the highest value or purpose. If that lure is rejected, then future possibilities are affected.

Divine Persuasion and Self-Determination

Griffin deals with issues involving divine persuasion and self-determina-

tion as he outlines and formulates a process theodicy.² God uses the modus operandi of persuasion to influence His Creation. Additionally, God's persuasion is an actualizing persuasion that moves people toward creative-responsive love. The persuasion of God does not take away the freedom of anyone. If there is no freedom of the will, then no persuasion is possible.

Both concrescence and transition are characteristic of actual occasions of existence; these are the two processes and two types of power related to genuine existential events. Concrescence happens within an actual occasion, and transition occurs between such occurrences. The power of becoming, or concrescence, forms the self-determination aspect of the being. God determines the possibilities but not the outcome. In Whitehead's words, "An originality in the temporal world is conditioned, though not determined, by the initial subjective aim supplied by the ground of all order and of all originality."³ The meaning of transition is that each actual occasion prehends or takes into account all the previous data that went into its own making. Transition is the process by which the data are transmitted from one occasion to the subsequent occasion. There is a powerful element of causality affecting each person; nevertheless, there always is present a degree of self-determination which makes choice meaningful.

There is a balance, in process theology, between determinism and freedom within existence. For Whitehead, the notion of efficient causation does not negate freedom.

²David Griffin, God, Power and Evil (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976).

³Ibid., p. 281.

However far the sphere of efficient causation be pushed in the determination of components of a concrescence... there always remains the final reaction of the self-creative unity of the universe.⁴

It is through God's persuasion that one is lured to find freedom. In accepting God's lure toward the highest values, a person moves toward actualization.

Persuasion and Suffering Love

What is distinctive about the actualizing persuasion of God is that it is involved in suffering love. Daniel Day Williams states that, by definition, all love is involved in suffering. There is a sense in loving in which both the lover and the loved are transformed by the experience; there is a change and effect as a result of love. Not all forms of suffering involve love; but all forms of love involve suffering. What is characteristic of suffering is some consequence on both entities. Williams presents five categories that are necessary for love: individuality and taking account of the other; freedom; action and suffering; causality; and impartial judgment in loving concern for the other. All of these conditions apply not only to human love but also to God's love.⁵

Williams says that to love is to seek the other's well-being, to give another the consideration and understanding one gives to one's self. It is the avoidance of destructive anger and hate and is the expression of concern. If God loves humans, then God suffers as a result of that love. The God who is unaffected by what takes place in time is the God of predestination and unfreedom. The suffering love known

⁴ Ibid., as quoted from Whitehead's Process and Reality, p. 75.

⁵ Daniel Day Williams, Spirit and the Forms of Love (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), pp. 115-123.

in Christ is the most powerful form of persuasion.

In the traditional Augustinian-Tillichian concept, the notion of God as "being itself" does not help in giving us insight into understanding the mystery of love. In this tradition, the transcendent God is unaffected by the world; thus, it is difficult to assert that God loves at all. The Biblical vision of God who is concerned even with the sparrow that falls to the ground does not remain consistent in this theology. In process theology, however, God is affected by and thus changed by His Creation. The fact that God is concerned and involved in the world is part of the power of God's persuasion.

Pastoral Counseling: Strength in Weakness

One experience at the Reception Center at the California Institution for Women at Frontera was extremely powerful, illustrating the paradoxes, strength in weakness and suffering in love. At the prison, a woman called "Mama" often came to the bi-weekly groups of the student chaplain. Generally, these groups were made up of about twelve women. The chaplain's style of leadership allowed these women to release many of their pent-up emotions.

This particular group began with a great deal of complaining. It soon was focused on the pain the women felt in being away from their children. (This separation from children and loved ones is probably the greatest single cause of guilt and hurt for the women.) Many of the women felt an acute sense of guilt for causing their children to suffer in their absence. In this session, one of the women, Bonnie, commented on the difficulty of being away from her children. The other women in the group responded with similar stories concerning their own children. Then, Mama

interrupted, abruptly saying that she wanted to share something with the group. "I was in the garage," she said, "Inside the car with my husband, and I was to drive. He was in a really bad mood and in a hurry. He started yelling at me to hurry up and get that damned, blankety-blank thing in reverse. I backed up in a hurry and ran over my only daughter in the driveway and killed her!" A few minutes elapsed, as Mama cried intensely; then she continued. "Damn it, at least be thankful that you have a tomorrow with your kids!" A bit later in the group, one of the women said, "Maybe the purpose in all of that is that somehow you are now able to be Mother to us in here."

Mama risked vulnerability in the group when she shared her pain. The very weakness of her position was what made it so powerfully persuasive in the group. The notion of strength in weakness became especially clear in the dynamics of this encounter.

The Persuasive Call

The meaning of persuasion is that one form of power is trying to influence another form with some degree of power. John Cobb asserts that God can be recognized as the One Who Calls. The cry of the One Who Calls often shatters a person's stability and security, encouraging him to let go of what he has. It is a call forward toward intensified life and new love. The persuasion of the One Who Calls is not coercive but depends on the choice of each person.⁶

In order for the power of persuasion to be effective and meaningful, it

⁶ John B. Cobb, Jr., God and the World (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), Ch. II, pp. 44-66.

must include some positive, anticipated outcome. Cobb states that Whiteheadian philosophy emphasizes that each opportunity aims at intensity of feeling, not simply for its own end but for a significant future.⁷ There can be no persuasion apart from the anticipation of a particular consequence. Cobb says that in Whitehead's thought only the actual occasion that has sufficient strength or power can make a valuable contribution to the future.⁸ Strength is the result of intensity and complexity. The more intense and complex the persuasion event, the greater is the likelihood of it making an impact on the future.

According to Whitehead, beauty is of intrinsic value; beauty is the essential value in life and is part of God's persuasive call. The ultimate category for this philosopher, however, is not beauty but peace. Cobb says that for Whitehead, peace is not at all a limitation; it is an openness of experience. There is a realization in peace that there is value in the universe outside and beyond our own understanding, that our aims can contribute to the harmony of the whole. Thus, in this system, the ultimate goal that is or can be the focus of the persuasive power is peace. For Whitehead, peace is "... that Harmony of Harmonies which calms destructive turbulence and completes civilization.... It is a positive feeling which crowns the 'life and motion' of the soul."⁹ The efficacy of the power of actualizing persuasion is contingent upon the anticipated outcome, such as peace or, to a lesser extent in psychological terms, self-actualization as the sought-after goal. Beauty

⁷ John Cobb, Jr., A Christian Natural Theology (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), p. 110.

⁸ Ibid., p. 112.

⁹ Ibid., p. 131., as quoted from Whitehead.

or peace is part of God's persuasive call forward.

Whitehead demonstrates the way in which the persuasive call manifests itself. The following description of the dynamics of persuasion helps in understanding the creative 'lure for feeling.' The words 'lure' and 'persuasion' in Whitehead's terminology are roughly interchangeable.

The 'lure for feeling' is the final cause guiding the concrescence of feelings. By this concrescence the multifold datum of the primary phrase is gathered into the unity of the final satisfaction of feeling.¹⁰

This 'lure for feeling' is present as the persuasion of the pastoral counseling encounter. The values the counselor holds are persuasive within themselves. This is one reason why the counselor's own personality is of major significance in the counseling session. The personal identity of the counselor and the values he espouses directly or indirectly serve as lures for feeling for the counselee.

Persuasion vs. Coercion

Whitehead describes the creation of the world in Plato's concept: "The creation of the world -- that is to say, the world of civilized order -- is the victory of persuasion over force."¹¹ Opting for force or coercion is evidence of the breakdown of civilization. Whitehead insists:

The worth of men consists in their ability to persuasion. They can persuade and can be persuaded by the disclosure of alternatives, the better and the worse. Civilization is the maintenance of social order, by its own inherent persuasiveness as embodying the nobler alternative. The recourse to force,

¹⁰ Alfred North Whitehead, Process and Reality (New York: Free Press, 1969), p. 214.

¹¹ Alfred North Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas (New York: Free Press, 1961), p. 25.

however unavoidable, is a disclosure of the failure of civilization, either in the general society or in a remnant of individuals. Thus in a live civilization there is always an element of unrest. For sensitiveness to ideas means curiosity, adventure, change. Civilized order survives on its merits, and is transformed by its power of recognizing its imperfections.¹²

The fact that people can discriminate consciously between the positive results of some forms of persuasion and the destructiveness that is involved in coercion or force points to the radical freedom that is a part of existence. That ultimately the choice will be toward persuasion is the ground of hope for the future. At present, there is no social system that does not have a mixture of force and persuasion, love and hate, violence and peace. The value of a society is the degree to which the positive forms of persuasion are prevailing. Whitehead comments:

This bond is the growth of reverence for that power in virtue of which nature harbours ideal ends, and produces individual beings capable of conscious discrimination of such ends. This reverence is the foundation of the respect for man as man. It thereby secures that liberty of thought and action, required for the upward adventure of life on this Earth.¹³

The power of persuasion does not lie in simplistic harmony or a pseudo peace acting as an anesthesia. Rather, the potency of persuasion lies in its alliance with universal truths that, in this fragmented world, often contribute to an initial disharmony for the sake of the ultimate harmony; that is, for the sake of peace. In Whitehead's own words:

There is a freedom lying beyond circumstance, derived from the direct intuition that life can be grounded upon its absorption in what is changeless amid change.... It is the freedom of that virtue directly derived from the source of all harmony. For it is conditioned only by its adequacy of understanding. And understanding has this quality that, however it be led up to, it issues in the soul freely conforming its nature to the supremacy of insight.

¹²Ibid., p. 83.

¹³Ibid., p. 86.

It is the reconciliation of freedom with the compulsion of the truth. In this sense the captive can be free, taking as his own the supreme insight, the indwelling persuasion towards the harmony which is the height of existence.¹⁴

In this Whiteheadian philosophy, God introduces the relevant possibilities as lures in each situation. It is persuasion, not force, that characterizes God's involvement in the world. To the extent that an actual entity accepts the creative lure God has introduced and choosing disharmony and chaos. Still, in His patience and love, God continually lures each person even when he has turned away. He is the Hound of Heaven, leading the world by the power of persuasion into the realization of truth, beauty, and peace.

Divine Persuasion and Limited Coercion

Lewis S. Ford develops Whitehead's understanding of the divine activity as being one of persuasion. He contends that God has unlimited persuasive power but a limited amount of coercive power. This modified position seems more compatible with some of the Biblical accounts of God's activity. Restricting God's power to only the power of persuasion too severely limits the role of the divine in the universe. The image of God's using actualizing persuasion is more congruent with Ford's position than with Whitehead's.

But power may be defined more broadly as the capacity to influence the outcome of any process of actualization, thereby permitting both persuasive and coercive power. Coercive power directly influences the outcome, since the process must conform to its control. Persuasive power operates more indirectly, for it is effective in determining the outcome only to the extent that the process appropriates and reaffirms for itself the aims envisioned in the persuasion. Thus the measure of control introduced differs; coercive power and control are commensurate, while persuasive power introduces the additional

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 67-68.

variable of acceptance by the process in actualization. That God's control is in fact limited by the existence of evil would signify a limited coercive power, but it is compatible with unlimited persuasive power.¹⁵

Ford's use of the word 'actualization' should not be confused with the self-actualization model that Maslow proposes. Maslow's actualization refers to one's realization of potential, which certainly has parallels in Whiteheadian or process thought. In Ford's usage, actualization refers to the concrescence of the actual occasions and the achievement of satisfaction.

In this modification of Whitehead's understanding of the divine activity, it is easier to talk about the freedom of God as well as God's own self-limitation. Attributing to God the power to use some limited force or coercion is more congruent with Man's being in the image of God. Certainly if Man possesses the capacity to exercise coercive power, how much more would God have the same ability!

The divine activity has definite implications in terms of human freedom. Ford sees the mutual need of freedom for both people and God.

To the extent that God exercises such power (coercive power), creaturely freedom is restricted, the reality of the world is diminished, and the divine experience is impoverished.¹⁶

Ford, as well as Whitehead, insists that without the alternative of divine persuasion, we confront two extremes, one of them being divine determinism and the other pure chance.¹⁷ The power of persuasion is God's activity that makes for creativity and freedom in the world.

Lewis S. Ford, "Divine Persuasion and the Triumph of the Good," Eds. Delwin Brown, Ralph E. James, Sr., and Gene Reeves, Process Philosophy and Christian Thought (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1971), pp. 288-289.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 289.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 290.

Any divine power which so influences the world without violating its integrity is properly called persuasive, while the necessary self-activity of the creature insures the spontaneity of response. This spontaneity may be minimal for protons and electrons, but in the course of the evolutionary advance, sustained until now, it has manifested itself in ever richer forms as the vitality of living cells, the conscious activity of higher animals, and the self-conscious freedom of man. Spontaneity has matured as freedom.¹⁸

The distinctions between various forms of persuasion do not really come out in process theology as they should. Many forms of persuasion are manipulative and do not result in freedom. The divine persuasion lures toward the highest valuation in each actual occasion of existence. This activity is to be understood as God's actualizing persuasion because the amplification of genuine human freedom is the result.

Persuasion in the Bible

That God is a God of persuasion is rooted in the Biblical texts. At times, however, in both Old and New Testaments, God is pictured as a coercive, compelling force rather than a persuasive force. The dominant motif in the Bible of the persuasion of God versus His coercion is illustrated in Hosea 11:8 where God agonizes within Himself:

How can I give you up, O Ephraim, and how can I hand you over, O Judah?.... My heart recoils within Me, My compassion grows warm and tender. I will not execute My fierce anger. I will not again destroy Ephraim.

Daniel Day Williams argues that this agonizing of God implies God's own suffering. This suffering love is the most persuasive aspect of the Biblical message. God's involvement with His Creation is fundamental to His ability to persuade.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 290.

The idea of the divine influence as persuasion can be traced all the way back to Plato. Whitehead comments that Plato's greatest intellectual discovery in the field of the history of religion was: "The divine element in the world is to be conceived as a persuasive agency and not as a coercive agency."¹⁹ The meaning of persuasion is that one entity can influence another entity. As an opposite to coercion, the entity in persuasion has a real choice as to how it will respond to the input given it. In this chapter, on the other hand, it can be argued that God's actualizing persuasion can sometimes include forms of coercion which work for good. The Biblical accounts give numerous examples of how God's activity in forming the People of Israel was sometimes a coercive one; however, exposure to that brand of coercion brought the Children of Israel to know greater amounts of freedom.

In the New Testament, the persuasive love of God becomes actualized in the person of Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ, the persuasive power of love is both hidden and revealed. The power of love on the Cross is hidden in its vulnerability to the world and in its initial powerlessness that becomes so powerfully redemptive. At the same time, the power of suffering love is powerfully transmitted and communicated to us as a revelation of God. The power of persuasion through suffering love had apparently lost its potency in defeat on the Cross. Yet, out of weakness and vulnerability came the victory that was known in the suffering love of Jesus Christ.

The coercion of God is expressed especially in the Old Testament. Limited coercion in the form of healing can be seen as one of the valuable assets of un-

¹⁹Griffin, Op. cit., p. 280, as quoted from Whitehead.

derstanding God's function. It is basically that of persuasion with limited elements of coercion. Williams puts it accurately, "In Old Testament religion, disease and sickness come from the hand of God as do all the fortunes and circumstances of life. (Deut. 29:22; !! Chron. 21:18-19). But God is also the healer of diseases. This theme occurs frequently in the Psalms and was the basis of one temple cult."²⁰

The power of healing is to some extent also the power to force or coerce. Jesus Christ showed that God's limited coercive power is used in healing ways. However, God's power is shown basically in His persuasive love in the Bible. According to Williams, "... love is the center of Christ's disclosure of our humanity. God has shown his love for us in the action which reveals his purpose, and that action is told in the Christian story of Jesus."²¹ God's actualizing persuasion is known especially in the life of Christ. The basis of all care of souls is eloquently described by Williams:

It is an action in love which makes concrete the spirit of ministry we know in Christ. But there is a strangeness about such love. It is spirit, never mere form. To love means to conform our action to the concrete needs of the neighbor. Our human need is involved with out guilt, so God's love is expressed as forgiveness. Our need is for hope in the midst of estrangement. So God has to bear with us in our own suffering.²²

Wholistic Pastoral Counseling

The suffering love evident in the Old Testament and amplified in the New has implications for pastoral counseling. Not only can the counselor express suffering

²⁰Daniel Day Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p. 14.

²¹Ibid., p. 17.

²²Ibid., p. 17.

love in relationship to the client (and vice versa), but also the client is encouraged to actualize the social dimension of the Gospel. Here the counselor's own example is probably the most persuasive tool in moving the client toward wholeness and social awareness.

Part of the meaning of personal integrity is awareness of the social milieu. The power of persuasion has a social dimension that has relevance for people and for the Church. In the American (USA) culture where the gospel of progress is still so widespread, how can a message of relinquishment be persuasive? Liberation theology has emphasized the importance of theology as critical reflection on social praxis. It is when the people and the Church begin to transcend and reflect adequately upon the prevailing values in society that some prophetic action toward the future will be realized. God's persuasion often challenges us to sacrifice our own gratification for the greater good of the whole. It is only through living a life in the Spirit that we can transcend our own needs, desires, and emotions and seek authentic communion with the other. If one understands the baffling power of persuasion through suffering love, it may even be conceivable that a message of relinquishment might have some promise.

Sister Marie Neal describes the contemporary plight of North American churches. They are often associated with the oppressors rather than the oppressed. The appeal is toward the status quo rather than to the dispossessed. When this occurs, the Church loses its prophetic voice, which is essential to the kerygma of the Gospel. In recent years the Church, as a result of Vatican II, liberation theology, and other movements, is beginning to reclaim its proper identification and ministry to the poor. The response that the North American Church can make to the libera-

tion theologians is to begin to move toward a theology of relinquishment.²³ The particular goal of relinquishment is met through what Paulo Friere calls conscientization. This conscientization is the pedagogy of the oppressed and the oppressor with differentiation: for the oppressed it is a message of liberation, and for the oppressor it is a message of relinquishment.

The power of persuasion is utilized in this consciousness-raising technique of conscientization. Unfortunately, it is a much more popular and potent message among the oppressed than among the oppressors. The difficult paradox to communicate is that this message of relinquishment is also one of liberation for the oppressor. The oppressor carries the burden of his oppression, which keeps him from true self-actualization, wholeness, and peace.

Reinhold Niebuhr states that there is no pure solution to this problem, for even the saint is the sinner. The oppressor and the oppressed dwell within all people in varying degrees. The oppressor's efforts at relinquishment will be tainted always with the sin of Pride. Indeed, when the oppressed finally find liberation there is always the strong tendency to turn around and become the oppressors. There never is a time when the Grace of God goes unneeded, especially when people demonstrate their shortcomings. This insight into the nature of sin did not still Niebuhr's strong emphasis on the importance of the social gospel.

The divergences of liberation theology and a theology of relinquishment have in pastoral counseling abound. The counselor is challenged, not simply to adjust the counselee to the environment or culture, but to persuade the counselee to transcend

²³Marie Augusta Neal, A Socio-Theology of Letting Go (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), p. 4.

the values of his setting. Conscientization can be included in the process of self-actualization. The sphere of consciousness is widened to include not only one's immediate environment but also the global community. There is so much injustice and suffering in the world that consciousness-raising can accompany depression and paralysis. It is important that the counselee understands the limits of his efforts in this process of conscientization. The self-actualized person, at times, must be able to shelter himself from the problems about him and, most importantly, realize that the divine power of persuasion is ever at work in the world.

Sister Neal quotes Durkheim in saying that the God most people worship is "the collective and anonymous force of the clan."²⁴ She interprets this to mean that God is, for most, "the social forces that bear upon people and that each one experiences both as coercive and compelling."²⁵ It is true that for many, and certainly in traditional Christian thinking, God's power is only that of coercion and compulsion. The widespread retreat to secular models can be attributed in part to this fatalistic understanding of God's work in the world.

If there is no real power in the hands of the children of God, then there is no purpose in the social gospel or in persuasion through conscientization. It is evident, however, that the ministry of Jesus Christ pointed to the importance of love in this life, so that what is loosed on Earth will be loosed in Heaven. This enterprise makes a difference in this existence and, ultimately, to God.

²³Ibid., p. 9.

²⁵Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

INTEGRATING PSYCHOLOGY AND THEOLOGY ON THE POWER OF PERSUASION IN PASTORAL COUNSELING

In this fourth chapter, an attempt is made to integrate the fields of psychology and theology in relationship to the power of persuasion. Pastoral counseling attempts conjunction of the religious dimension of pastoring and the psychological dimension of counseling, for the power of persuasion is relevant to both spheres, although not in quite the same way. God's is an actualizing persuasion that offers real freedom in Christ; human persuasion is often manipulative, tending toward oppressive coercion. God persuades through suffering love and by luring toward the highest possibilities; human manipulative persuasion is tainted with exploitation and destruction. God persuades by offering the radical gift of freedom through human acceptance and human actualization of His loving, creative possibilities for the future. The evil tendencies in the human power of persuasion are caused by the distortion or rejection of that freedom and by failure to fulfill those possibilities. Although human persuasion contains the essential elements existing in God's persuasion, Man often sins and turns away from God's lure toward creativity.

There is an interrelationship between what is secular and psychological, and what is religious and spiritual. It is often the case that the religious significance of what was thought to be a "purely secular" and psychological phenomenon becomes evident. In like manner, the "exclusively" religious experience is seen to have offshoots that are secular and psychological. Many individuals who consider themselves nonreligious have nevertheless built into their lives what is in effect a religion. The

organized religions clearly have played a strong role in human psychological development, i.e., the formation of behavior patterns, types of motivation and structured relationships.¹

Integrative Power and Beauty

In the integration of psychological and theological truth in relationship to the power of persuasion, the notions of integrative power and Whitehead's idea of beauty bring delineation to the subject. In Whitehead's philosophy, beauty is not understood in the conventional way.

Beauty, the name of this all-embracing value, cannot be interpreted simply in terms of aesthetic categories. It is evoked by natural occurrences and by works of art, to be sure, but also by conduct, action, virtue, ideas, and even by truth.²

The meanings that underline the notion of beauty for Whitehead can serve as the aims envisioned in actualizing persuasion. The pastoral counselor encourages the counselee to realize the highest ideals and values possible, even when in a particular situation the highest value indeed may not be exceedingly attractive or beautiful, for if actualized, it will make way for the greater realization of beauty in the subsequent occasion.

Rollo May, in his categories of power, describes the highest form of power as being integrative power. This kind of power is power with the other person, power

¹ Milton Rokesch, "Paradoxes of Religious Belief," William Sadler, Personality and Religion (New York: Milton Rokesch, 1977), pp. 225-233.

² Lewis S. Ford, "Divine Persuasion and the Triumph of the Good," Eds. Delwin Brown, Ralph E. James, Sr., and Gene Reeves, Process Philosophy and Christian Thought (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1971), p. 293.

that abets the neighbor's power. The non-violent techniques of Martin Luther King and Gandhi demonstrated this form of power.³

Usually, power is not associated with beauty; but with the understandings of May's integrative power and Whitehead's idea of beauty, the relationship is evident. The power of persuasion in moving the counselee toward self-actualization is an integrative power that envisions beauty as its aim and process. The power in weakness and the power in suffering love is integrative power. The beauty that Whitehead speaks of is a part of the process and the aim of such power.

Paradox and Persuasion

Many of the tenets of the Christian faith are extremely paradoxical. Losing one's life in order to find it, for example, is such a logical contradiction. The power of persuasion in pastoral counseling does not lead to self-actualization if cheap harmonies attempt to do away with the paradoxes of faith. Life in the Spirit may encourage a person to show concern for the neighbor in such a way that by the world's standards he would be a fool. Life in the Spirit and transcendence enable people to accept and live within the contradictions of faith. The call of God is such that people are not conformed to this world but are transformed by the love shown in Christ. Victory in defeat, suffering in love, and strength in weakness are extreme paradoxical dynamics in the Christian faith, and understanding of the paradoxical notions of faith is still sought.

Reinhold Niebuhr has helped the articulation of many of the paradoxes of faith:

³Rollo May, Power and Innocence (New York: Dell, 1972), p. 109.

The incongruity of man's greatness and weakness, of his mortality, is the source of his temptation to evil. Some men seek to escape from their greatness to their weakness; they try to deny the freedom of their spirit in order to achieve the serenity of nature. Some men seek to escape from their weakness to their greatness. But these methods of escape are unavailing.... The effort to escape from weakness to greatness leads not to security but to the evils of greed and lust for power, or to the opposite evils of a spirituality which denies the creaturely limitations of human existence.⁴

The pastoral counselor, in using the power of actualizing persuasion, does not make a cheap attempt to harmonize the paradoxes of the counselee. Instead, insight and understanding are needed in order to transcend these paradoxes.

At the women's prison at Frontera, many of the women are not able to transcend their situation; they are caught in either a rigid moral system or in amoralism. Pastoral counseling seeks to persuade the counselee toward self-actualization so that this transcendence is possible. There is a tragic element in many forms of traditional religion that affected the lives of some of the women. So often, religion is used as a security system that in effect inures the person to the creative possibilities in life. Personal work in the California Institution for Women at Frontera as a student chaplain provided first-person experience of many individuals with incredibly closed religious systems which had straight-jacketed their lives. There appears to be some relationship between these lock-tight systems and the recourse to crime. Particularly impressive was the number of preachers' daughters incarcerated at C. I. W. Often, their fathers were highly-moralistic, attempting to keep their children in a particular mode of behavior and system of beliefs. Many rebelled; others tried to identify, finding only that they were falling short of what was demanded of them.

⁴Reinhold Niebuhr, "Honour and Faith" Discerning the Signs of the Times (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), p. 124.

In the prison, there was another group that had a type of amorality that was hard to imagine. The whole name of the game for them was Survival. The murder of a person or persons to insure that survival would not be a concern for them. While there seemed to be an undeveloped value system, rather than the overdeveloped superego, in some of the preachers' daughters, other women at the prison experienced almost a total separation of what they considered to be the spiritual (their religion) and their values or moral behavior. In actuality, the values that they did live by comprised their religion. Paradoxically, women with either an amoral or highly moralistic background developed surprisingly similar lifestyles.

The role of the pastoral counselor to people who arrive at the same place by paradoxical means is difficult. The pastor is in the dual position where he must try to reinforce emerging values (in those with underdeveloped egos) and help break down the rigid value systems (as held by the preachers' daughters) that hamper growth. Many times it is not a clear-cut course of counseling when there are both amorality and rigid values in the counselee.

Intrinsic/Extrinsic Persuasion

Studies in the psychology of religion by Allport show that those people who are more religious are, in fact, also more bigoted, more anxious, and less humanitarian than nonreligious people. They make a distinction between those people who are extrinsic in their religious orientation and those who are intrinsic. Extrinsic attitudes toward religion increase the negative attributes of the personality and stifle growth. In contrast, the intrinsic attitudes toward religion tend to move people toward maturity and self-actualization. Extrinsic outlooks are self-centered, opportunistic,

and outer-directed. On the other hand, intrinsic outlooks involve trust, compassion, humility, and inner-directedness.⁵

The power of persuasion can be used to augment intrinsic or extrinsic attitudes in religious development. Much of the history of the Christian faith illustrates how initially intrinsic motivations give way to extrinsic motivations. The Crusades, the Inquisition, and the burning of witches and heretics are extreme examples of how the power of persuasion can become the power of coercion in destructive ways. In all of these movements, the forced compliance to an extrinsic set of beliefs was compelled if persuasion was insufficient.

These studies by Allport are suggestive of the dangers the Church faces in its use of the power of persuasion. The crucial question still is, persuasion toward what? Can the Church be the builder of these intrinsic values in religion, rather than the reinforcer of the extrinsic values? If it is to persuade toward the true values that are represented in the Gospel, the Church must begin to re-evaluate some of its goals and priorities.

Charisma, Self-Emptying and Persuasion

Moving beyond Allport, Wayne Oates states that the power of persuasion is the common denominator of magic, religion, and science. At one point, Oates comments concerning charisma as it relates to the power of persuasion:

Charisma is an ethically purged power of persuasion or magic. A power of persuasion lived in ethical responsibility both to God and to the well-being of one's subject calls for a self-emptying, a taking on of the condition of the other person. Empathy precedes such persuasion. Understanding is the stuff of which it is made. We are back to the essential charisma of an incarnational

⁵Ibid., pp. 281-283.

approach to life. Yet the same gifts can be practiced apart from and in defiance of God. Thus, creativity and the power to influence others can become a means of self-aggrandizement, exploitation and deception.⁶

Oates gives an astute definition of the power of persuasion in charisma and the perversion of this power. Yet, he suggests that one can be creative in defiance of God, which indicates a contradiction in terms. In consideration of process theology, God is the ground of all creativity and growth. To be creative cannot be, therefore, in defiance of God, it is to accept the lure of God. Nevertheless, Oates shows a realization of the positive and negative tendencies in persuasion understood in this paper as manipulative and actualization persuasions.

One thing that is admirable in Oates' description of the power of persuasion is his application of the idea of self-emptying in relationship to the other. This self-emptying is not only a necessary ingredient to ethical persuasion, but it is one of the most powerful forms of persuasion.

In Philippians 2:5-7, this motif is expressed. This Christ-hymn sets forth the powerfully persuasive notion of self-emptying in relationship to Jesus Christ:

Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

The concept of self-emptying as a form of persuasion applies not just to the person of Jesus Christ; the pastoral counselor also can make use of this concept in his persuasion. The self-emptying of the counselor in relationship to the client can be powerfully persuasive. This implies openness and trust in the relationship.

The power of persuasion is a point of integration between psychology and re-

⁶Wayne Oates, The Psychology of Religion (Waco, TX: Word, 1973), pp. 162-163.

ligion. There are both psychological and spiritual dimensions in this phenomenon.

In its human dimensions, Oates cites an experimental study of persuasion:

Behavior is changed in whatever desired direction in keeping with several factors: (1) high credibility of the communicator; (2) the clear nonambiguous statement, of one's own conclusions and recommendations rather than leaving the person or group to make up their own mind; (3) the provision of reasons for possible failure as a basis for preparing for, accounting for or discounting failure; (4) the provision of group support of decisions and behavior change; (5) the creation of opportunities for the person to enact the behavior in role performance in relatively safe surroundings.⁷

In some of these factors there is a suggestion of a manipulative understanding of the power of persuasion. People are not encouraged to develop their own attitudes in critical reflection; rather, in a brainwashing fashion, they do not make up their own minds. Nonetheless, these categories of basically manipulative persuasion are helpful in assisting one to recognize some of the ingredients in the power of persuasion.

Life in the Spirit and Divine Directivity

In the integration of psychology and religion, there are many figures that make prominent contributions to the discussion. John Cobb attempts with profound insight the integration of theology and pastoral care. Christian pastors are confronted with situations with direct relevance to humanistic psychology, and, likewise, psychologists are ever confronted with the spiritual ramifications of the problems they deal with in their counseling. Cobb suggests that the humanistic psychology of our day has deep roots in Judæo-Christian traditions. The problems of linking the disciplines

⁷Ibid., p. 162

still abound, and there is no easy solution.⁸

John Cobb suggests categories that the pastor can strive to help the individual achieve. Life in the Spirit is the main pursuit. People have a life in the Spirit when they are able to transcend the emotion, reason and forces in the environment that would persuade them. In Cobb's words:

The thrust of spiritual existence is to break the power of community over the individual. Insofar as we transcend ourselves, we transcend also the emotions, purposes and meanings that we derive from others, and we are thus enabled to decide about them. We can constitute ourselves with some freedom in ways that are not produced by the community.⁹

Cobb introduces a term that he applies to the persuasion of God. "This factor is an orientation toward the future, an aim, a directionality, a goal directedness. We will call it directivity."¹⁰ For Cobb this directivity is a process that moves one to know greater amounts of freedom. God's directivity lures each person to new, creative possibilities and growth. The term 'actualizing persuasion' may be preferred in describing God's activity. "Directivity" has connotations of manipulative persuasion that do not reflect divine reality.

In the integration that John Cobb attempts, the realization comes that the discussion between these two disciplines is both an ongoing process and an imperative one. The role of the pastoral counselor is to enable the counselee to open himself to the creative possibilities that God, in His directivity, is luring him toward. Cobb says that it is the realization of what-is-not-yet in the what-is. This directivity is

⁸ John B. Cobb, Jr., Theology and Pastoral Care (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), p. 1.

⁹ Ibid., p. 35.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 47.

essential to life, or else there would not be the call forward to new aims but only a meaningless repetition of the past.¹¹

Cobb expresses the way in which freedom arises in the human predicament:

God gives us freedom: not a general capacity built into human nature, but a specific freedom in each new situation. To exercise that freedom is to choose for the possibility we receive from God, the possibility that makes us free. Not to choose that possibility is to surrender to bondage. To use the freedom we receive is to become open to still new possibilities. Our freedom increases as God becomes more fully imminent in us. To refuse the gift of freedom is to shut God out.¹²

The concept of God as creator is seen in terms of a process. There is an on-going sense of creation rather than a once-and-for-all creation. God is acting continually in the universe; He challenges each person to a new realization of the creative possibilities in life. There is also a sense in which each actual entity can affect another entity. It is this power to affect the other entity that is the power of persuasion.

The difficulty in change is that in order to let the directivity of God transform one's life, one must let go of what he is at present. The risk is that, as a person lets go, he does not know the way in which he will be transformed in the future; he does not know what he will become.¹³

In pastoral counseling, the counselor cannot dictate the way in which growth will take place; the counselor can only encourage openness to the directivity of God which makes for growth and creativity. Cobb suggests that the pastoral counselor, in

¹¹Ibid., Ch. IV, "God and Pastoral Care," pp. 43-56.

¹²Ibid., pp. 49-50.

¹³Ibid., p. 52.

leading the counselee to know greater amounts of growth, is in the direct service of God.¹⁴

Possibly, Cobb could have placed more emphasis on a person's freedom to actualize actively the creative possibilities that God has envisioned. A person can make definite the indefinite possibilities that God has proposed. Cobb suggests that a person has freedom to the extent that life is lived in the Spirit. This integration of theology and pastoral care that Cobb has developed is extremely valuable in establishing a more wholistic understanding of the task of pastoral counseling.

Pastoral Counseling: Logotherapy

One of the most influential figures in the integration of religion and psychology is Viktor Frankl. Frankl describes his logotherapy as the bringing together the psychological elements in people with the spiritual dimensions. Frankl argues that what is essential to the human being is the "will to meaning," the search for purpose. This logotherapy is the therapy of the Word. In his approach, there is a dependence on the presupposition that there is genuine freedom:

The spiritual core of a person can take a stand, whether positive or negative, affirming or denying, in the face of his own psychological character structure, as when attempting to overcome a habit or resist an urge. This potentiality essentially inherent in human existence is called in logotherapy the psychonoetic antagonism or the defiant power of the human spirit. What is meant thereby is man's capacity as a spiritual being to resist and brave whatever kind of conditioning, whether biological, psychological, or sociological in nature.¹⁵

¹⁴Ibid., p. 54.

¹⁵Robert C. Leslie, Jesus and Logotherapy (New York: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 31.

Frankl believes that a counselor does the client an injustice if he affirms what the client is. Instead, the counselor is called to affirm what the person can become. The emphasis in Frankl's thought correlates with the process notion of God as becoming creatively. Forever God is urging His creation to become creatively. According to Frankl, the ability of a person to choose freely and to become creatively is asserted in spite of three deterministic contingencies: the inherited disposition, the instincts, and the environment. Those people that would ignore the freedom of the human spirit are guilty of what he calls psychologism, that is, the psychological devaluation of humans.¹⁶

The pastoral counselor in this scheme has the responsibility to use the power of persuasion to encourage people to become what they, in their freedom, want to become. The client is encouraged to engage actively in the search for purpose and meaning. In Frankl's description of people in World War II concentration camps, he dramatically shows how the will to meaning was crucial to the survival of those incarcerated.

Divine and Human Power

In the sphere of pastoral counseling, the understanding of God in process theology has definite offshoots. Traditionally, theology has taken away much of the power that people have in their personal lives. Since God had all the power, there could be no ultimate significance in the actions of each person. Rollo May de-

¹⁶Viktor Frankl. The Doctor and the Soul (New York: Knopf, 1965), pp. xviii-xix.

scribes the way in which violence erupts.¹⁷ His thesis is that it is precisely when a person feels he has no power that he resorts to violence. The feeling of powerlessness leads to the destructive forms of demonstrating power. If theology can affirm the power that is authentically in the hands of each person, and if in pastoral counseling each person can be affirmed and supported in the constructive assertion of power, then new growth possibilities can be realized.

The power of actualizing persuasion that God uses challenges person-to-person relationships. So often, one uses self-defeating forms of manipulative persuasion that try to coerce the responses of another. Pastoral counseling should enable a person to open himself to the actualizing persuasion that was shown in Jesus Christ.

Abraham Maslow has demonstrated that people are unhealthy not because they think too highly of themselves but because their self-image is too low. The movement in psychology toward greater realization of personal power can be affirmed in process theology. The theological implications of Maslow's self-actualization model is in keeping with the New Testament's high estimate of human worth, but it is not adequate to the Biblical assessment of the human capacity to sin and fall short. Maslow is not a theologian, so he does not speak of sin; but he demonstrates some of the blocks to self-actualization and stresses the positive process.

In the pastoral counseling encounters, the empathic suffering with the counselee and the mutual sharing of the burden makes for the most effective ministering. It is in openness and vulnerability that the pastor exerts his most creative efforts. The pastoral counselor can persuade the counselee to move toward knowing greater amounts

¹⁷Rollo May, Power and Innocence (New York: Dell, 1972).

of wholeness and exercising more God-given freedom.

Conversion Techniques: Manipulative

or Actualizing Persuasion?

William Sargant describes the dynamics involved in conversion and brainwashing. Sargant's background is in the Methodist Church, so he spends considerable time evaluating the various techniques of persuasion that John Wesley used in order to bring about conversions. Charles Finney, of the Second Great Awakening in New England, is another key figure in the description of those who used specific techniques in order to convert sinners. Both Wesley and Finney had a very orthodox understanding of the Christian faith, judging from a modern, process theology perspective. Many of their manipulative persuasion techniques were congruent with their theology, while others were in a paradoxical relationship to the theology they espoused.

George Salmon, D.D. (c. 1859), spoke these words in a sermon:

If, when, through the operation of such laws surprising events take place, (and) we cry out.... "Such is the Will of God," instead of setting ourselves to inquire whether it was the will of God to give us power to bring about, or to prevent these results, then our conduct is not piety but sinful laziness.¹⁸

This is a perceptive attempt to reconcile the notion of the omnipotent Will of God and the authentic freedom and power of humans. Many of the preachers who attempted to save souls were confronted in their own theology by the irreconcilable paradox between an omnipotent God and creaturely freedom.

Sargant describes the process by which people are persuaded to be converted

¹⁸William Sargant, Battle for the Mind (New York: Doubleday, 1957), quote at the beginning.

and to accept a particular belief system. John Wesley brought people into a state of emotional excitement and even temporary emotional collapse through his particular style of preaching. He persuaded the hearers that they must make an immediate decision between certain damnation and the acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Wesley appealed not only to the intellect but also strongly to the emotions.¹⁹ The use of protracted meetings, the anxious seat (front row at church), and strong preaching were effective conversion techniques.

Sargant describes the process of brainwashing that does not depend simply upon increasing of group suggestibility but on heightening the individual's sense of anxiety and real or imaginary guilt, and developing in them a conflict of loyalties that is strong and prolonged enough to bring about the desired collapse. These techniques are certainly at the bottom end of the scale of manipulative persuasion versus actualizing persuasion. The modern reader should be wary of making unwarranted judgments concerning the character of a Wesley or Finney, however; in light of the environmental contingencies that influenced them in the Eighteenth Century setting, they led amazingly Christian lives. The entire "holiness" movement and the social reforms that it brought about speak well for the integrity of these great, early religious personalities. It also illustrates that even out of greatly manipulative persuasion can come authentically positive works of the Holy Spirit.

Thus, research into the techniques in conversion that Wesley and Finney used has especially interesting implications in terms of pastoral counseling. Often in modern-day counseling, the emotional catharsis of the counselee is encouraged.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

The person is, at that point, highly suggestible, and the pastoral counselor has the opportunity to use techniques of manipulative persuasion in order to bring the counselee to a particular point of view. It is here that the pastoral counselor, using the power of actualizing persuasion, must use restraint in his approach; the counselee must be allowed to work through the problem without the manipulation of the minister. This does not mean, however, that the pastor is not empathetically feeling with the person; it means only that he must not impose his own biases and prejudices on the counselee. Creative use of the power of persuasion by the counselor can move the client toward greater self-actualization.

The Power of Dissuasion

Many of the old-style preaching techniques, some of which are being used today, in effect use the power of dissuasion rather than the power of persuasion. The Christian faith is used as a legalistic system by which a person largely finds out what he cannot do. Jesus' positive emphasis on "what do ye do more than others" is brushed aside. Much preaching is more concerned with the power of dissuasion in this negative, legalistic sense. Dissuasion has implications that are both psychological and theological and have application in pastoral counseling.

From a psychological perspective, the power of persuasion in counseling sometimes can be correctly termed dissuasion. The power of dissuasion is the turning away from something by persuasion. The counselee may have a serious values conflict, and through a process of dissuasion he may decide to discard one set of values in favor of another. Through dissuasion, he can discriminate between stimuli in his environment and thus find the freedom to choose a particular lifestyle.

In theological terms, the activity of God is often seen as one of dissuading as distinct from persuading. God is seen as the all-powerful entity that keeps people from temptation. The primary function of the deity becomes one of restriction and law-making. It is possible that God, in presenting the highest value to each occasion, may be actually dissuading a person from his present course. Primarily, the activity of the Divine can best be understood as luring each entity toward the highest value of the moment with persuasion. It may be that God's persuasion involves a degree of dissuasion. However, the call of God is a call forward to new life and to creativity rather than a call backward or a call to turn away. Evil is overcome by Good, and dissuasion may suggest the running away from Evil.

Preaching as Persuasive Pastoral Counseling

It is not the intention of this project to give an in-depth analysis of the power of persuasion as it relates to preaching. Certainly an entire project might be devoted to such discussion. However, some treatment of preaching as similar to pastoral counseling is appropriate.

Preaching affords a great opportunity to utilize the power of persuasion on a group scale. Harry Emerson Fosdick, one of the best preachers of all time, said this about the art of preaching: "A good sermon is an engineering operation by which a chasm is bridged so that spiritual goods on one side -- the 'unsearchable riches of Christ' -- are actually transported into personal lives upon the other."²⁰

Through preaching, people who would not otherwise have an opportunity for

²⁰Harry Emerson Fosdick, The Living of These Days (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 99.

in-depth pastoral counseling may be helped on their journey toward self-actualization. Fosdick believed that neither the exegetical nor the topical preacher accomplished the task of preaching. The exegetical method of preaching was too far-removed from the mentality of the average listener. Methodologically, it has severe difficulties in that it often assumes that people are more interested in the ancient text than in the reality in which they present themselves. The failure on the other end of the spectrum is exemplified in the topical preacher who turns his sermons into lectures and his pulpit into a platform. The parishioner expects more from the preacher than a current events talk. There needs to be a basic rooting in Scripture to supply the necessary substance. Preaching, according to Fosdick, should be personal counseling on a group scale. A sermon is meant to meet needs. The place to start a sermon is with the real problems of the congregation, that is, the needs of the people.²¹

Every sermon should have for its main business the head-on constructive meeting of some problem which was puzzling minds, burdening consciences, distracting lives, and no sermon which so met a real human difficulty with light to throw on it and help to win a victory over it could possibly be futile.²²

The sermon is a cooperative adventure between the congregation and the preacher. It is a cooperative dialogue in which the questions, doubts, and objections are dealt with fairly.

Fosdick, in his preaching and writing, used a persuasive repertoire of authoritative sources other than Scripture. Music, art, literature, and other resources were

²¹Ibid., pp. 92-94.

²²Ibid., p. 94.

used as revelations of the Divine. Jesus was understood by Fosdick as uniquely revealing the Divine; the same Spirit is available to everyone today.

Probably one of the most significant indictments of modern-day preaching is that it too often is dull and bland. It is the contention of this writer that if preaching becomes boring, the preacher is most likely not preaching the Gospel.

As a student chaplain at the California Institution for Women at Frontera, the writer would often use humor in preaching, especially because of the tremendous despair and depression that many of the women experienced. The women often had a keen awareness of what they construed to be the Judgment of God but had much less existential experience of the Grace of God. Preaching in this environment was a powerful experience because of the responsiveness of the women in the worship service. The sermons grew out of the pastoral counseling relationship where the struggles and pain of the women were shared.

Reinhold Niebuhr has written a sermon on "Humour and Faith" in which he states that "Humour is the prelude to faith; and laughter is the beginning of prayer."²³ People are able to stand outside of life and experience transcendence via humour. A life in the Spirit which is the aim of good pastoral counseling, as well as good preaching, can be realized through transcendence.

Preaching can be persuasive pastoral counseling when the parishioners are encouraged in their pursuit to live Christian, self-actualized lives. Fosdick wrote that the function of good preaching was not simply to discuss topics like repentance, or faith, or the power of God to bring victory in defeat, to persuade people to repent,

²³ Reinhold Niebuhr, "Humour and Faith," Discerning the Signs of the Times (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946).

to produce Christian faith, and to send people out from their worship with a sense of God's victory known in Jesus Christ.²⁴

In the next section, "Wholistic Pastoral Counseling and Persuasion Via the Media," it is evident that preaching as pastoral counseling could have profound effect on large audiences. The kind of preaching that is generally broadcast, however, tends to be exceedingly manipulative and uses the power of dissuasion destructively. Nevertheless, the possibilities for creative use of the media (television and radio) should not be underestimated.

Wholistic Pastoral Counseling and Persuasion Via the Media

In order for the pastoral counselor to have a more wholistic approach to therapy, he needs to understand some of the forces that move a client in the direction opposite self-actualization. The emergence of television as a major persuader on the American scene has had profound effects on the individual in this culture. Whole value systems and moral attitudes become programmed into the mind via this medium. It is not unreasonable to assume that many modern-day psychological problems and difficulties are aggravated and may even have their bases in the manipulative persuasion of the "boob tube." The concern of both television programmers and commercial designers is not to instill worthwhile values in the viewers but to obtain the best possible ratings and shares and to sell the products. The psychological and theological ramifications of this powerful form of persuasion on an entire television-oriented generation should not be regarded lightly. In 1977, a coalition of Lutheran,

²⁴Fosdick, Op.cit., p. 99.

Methodist, and Church of the Brethren activists conducted several highly-sophisticated "anti-vidsex" workshops throughout the nation. These sixteen-hour courses were entitled "Television Awareness Training."²⁵ Unfortunately, many of the so-called awareness training courses are similar to the deprogramming campaigns aimed at the radical religious cults. These highly-manipulative persuasion techniques criticize in the name of freedom. Genuinely worthwhile causes always seem to have the radical "true believers," as detractors, but consumer protest over excessive violence and perverted sex on television should be applauded.

Vance Packard, in his best-selling book of the Fifties, Hidden Persuaders, describes the way in which the modern American is being manipulated and influenced by the "depth" approach in advertising. This is the application of methods of mass psychoanalysis to the field of advertising, which has grown into a multimillion-dollar enterprise. "Professional persuaders have seized upon it (mass psychoanalysis) in their groping for more effective ways to sell us their wares -- whether products, ideas, attitudes, candidates, goals, or states of mind."²⁶ This technique is what the industry calls "motivation analysis" or "motivation research." In this professional field of manipulative persuasion, nothing is sacred. Packard uses the illustration of a Chicago ad agency using psychiatric probing techniques on little girls. Another example is the use of public relations personnel in the Church to instruct the minister on how he can best manipulate the congregation.²⁷

²⁵Harvey Walter, "Sex and TV," Newsweek, (February 20, 1978), 55.

²⁶Vance Packard, The Hidden Persuaders (New York: Van Rees Press, 1957), p. 3.

²⁷Ibid., p. 5.

They are called the "depth boys" (or "depth persons," since women are working in this field more and more), since they seek to determine the depth reasons for behavior. The "why" of behavior is of paramount importance in developing the correct symbols that are used to persuade housewives, children, businessmen and businesswomen to buy a particular product. If there is no need for a product, then the motivation experts create a need by stimulating individuals to buy through psychological persuasion.

Clyde Miller points out the way in which the depth persons use "word triggers" and "picture triggers" to elicit particular behavioral responses. Miller believes with Skinner that all people are creatures of conditioned reflex.²⁸ Obviously not in Miller's intent are the implications that The Process of Persuasion title has for the relationship of the power of persuasion to process philosophy and process theology.

Packard expresses the various levels of consciousness that are of profound interest to the depth persons:

The first level is the conscious, rational level, where people know what is going on, and are able to tell why. The second and lower level is called, variously, preconscious and subconscious but involves that area where a person may know in a vague way what is going on within his own feelings, sensations and attitudes but would not be willing to tell why. This is the level of prejudices, assumptions, fears, emotional promptings and so on. Finally, the third level is where we not only are not aware of our true attitudes and feelings but would not discuss them if we could. Exploring our attitudes toward products at these second and third levels became known as the new science of motivational analysis or research, or just plain MR.²⁹

In this realization of persuasion, manipulative forms greatly tend to outnumber the actualizing forms. One's surface drives, desires, and needs are established in

²⁸ Ibid., p. 24, as quoted by Vance Packard.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 25.

order to find a point of vulnerability. Then, the psychological hooks are cast. Packard quotes the motivational expert Pierre Martineau who praised the early Marlboro (cigarette) campaign. The masculine figures and the attractive symbols put the cigarette, "right in the heart of some core meanings of smoking: masculinity, adulthood, vigor and potency. Quite obviously these meanings cannot be expressed openly. The consumer would reject them quite violently. The difference between a top-flight, creative man and the hack is this ability to express powerful meanings indirectly...."³⁰

The nature of this manipulative persuasion is such that if the intention is exposed or suggested too openly the effect is dissipated. It was determined by a motivational expert that the eye-blink rate of a person was a fairly good scale by which to judge the extent or presence of inner tension. In a supermarket women will often go into a type of hypnoidal trance; that is, the first stage of hypnosis. At the sound of the cash register bell and the voice of the clerk with the amount owed, the eye-blink rate goes up to the abnormal rate of forty-five blinks per minute. As she leaves the store the number of blinks goes back to normal.³¹

This has ramifications for pastoral counseling not merely in terms of assessing the extent of internal anxiety through excessive eye blinking. Obviously this should not be considered a very profound test but only suggestive. One parallel that may be considered is the relationship of the indirectness of many of the techniques in advertising to the indirectness or the directness of the pastoral counselor in his coun-

³⁰Ibid., p. 30.

³¹Ibid., pp. 106-107.

seling. To what extent does the minister lay out his particular biases and prejudices to the client? It seems that as long as biases are in the background, the tendency is that they become a means of manipulative persuasion as opposed to actualizing persuasion.

The question arises: Is it possible to reap some positive results from manipulative persuasion? An example might be a pastoral counselor manipulating a husband to relinquish a relationship and become faithful to his wife. The danger that only the symptom is treated in this type of manipulative persuasion is paramount: the use of any sort of manipulative techniques of persuasion tends to impair growth toward mature living and self-actualizing. Therefore, the value in this type of therapy is doubtful.

There is a way in which the pastoral counselor using actualizing persuasion should maintain some of the indirectness of the therapy. The actualizing pastor can use persuasion so that the mystique of the interaction is still intact. In any I-thou relationship there is a great deal of communication that defies analysis or explanation. In actualizing persuasion, the therapist need not feel that he must lay out every bias or intention in order for a positive result to be achieved in the sessions. Indeed, much of the real power of the relationship would be lost if such an attempt at pseudo-honesty were ventured. Many forms of manipulative persuasion are evident in assessing the current form of pastoral counseling. This paper takes the position that counseling should seek more actualizing forms of persuasion to find its full effectiveness. This understanding of manipulative persuasion is crucial for the pastoral counselor. If the counselor has no perception of the forces that are acting upon the client (and also upon himself), then the intention and purpose of the counsel-

ing experience is lost. When the pastoral counselor does not understand the dynamics of manipulative persuasion, the likelihood of his engaging in its very practice increases dramatically.

The manipulative persuasion of advertising techniques is in marked distinction from the actualizing techniques that should be reflected in pastoral counseling. In advertising, the person is encouraged to be outer-directed. Paradoxically, the same advertisement may be an appeal to the self-image of an inner-directed person. In contrast to advertising, the actualizing persuasion ideal in pastoral counseling is to move the person to know greater amounts of inner freedom through becoming more inner-directed and through learning to resist many of the efforts at manipulative persuasion.

The ethical questions raised in much of this manipulative persuasion of advertising abound. How can playing on psychological weaknesses, the vulnerable emotional spots of people, be justified? The profound danger that Packard demonstrates is that the advertising experts, the motivational researchers, become the definitive "moral" instructors in the culture. People may argue that this process of manipulative persuasion serves to increase the gross national product. Yet, in light of world hunger and a sense of global responsibility, this can hardly be seen as the highest ideal of the American people.

Vance Packard's provocative book, The Hidden Persuaders, has made a valuable contribution to the discussion. Nevertheless, he fails to perceive the ways in which even hidden persuasion can be a force for the good. Exceedingly few suggestions are made concerning the actualizing persuasion that is certainly possible on a group scale (as well as in all forms of pastoral counseling). His suggestion of draw-

ing up a code to establish the behavior of ethically responsible persuaders, however, is to be commended.³² This power of persuasion is a profound force that has the potential to be used in socially constructive or destructive ways. Tragically, the destructive manipulative forms of persuasion seem to be running rampant in this culture. It is into this scene that the task of the Church and, specifically, the task of the pastoral counselor, becomes so vitally important. The manipulative persuaders promise freedom, but it is a false freedom that brings with it bondage and a type of enslavement, both psychological and physical. The Christian faith, in contrast, offers the liberating freedom that is in the message of Jesus Christ. The goal of actualizing persuasion can be achieved only through perception into and transcendence above the manipulative forces that seek control for selfish ends. The techniques and positive gains of actualizing persuasion need to be expanded upon to counteract this manipulative persuasion that is so prevalent in our culture. Pastoral counseling can be effective only if the minister has a wholistic understanding of the nature of persuasion upon the life of the counselee.

³² Ibid., p. 259.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper has been to increase understanding in relationship to the power of persuasion as it applies to pastoral counseling. The fields of psychology and theology have been tapped in an effort toward integration in this aspect of pastoral care. It is in accordance with Shostrom's categories of manipulation and actualization that the power of persuasion can best be understood. Manipulative persuasion tends to involve deception, unawareness, control, and cynicism. In contrast, actualizing persuasion moves the counselee toward honesty, awareness, freedom, and trust.¹ These are the qualities of Maslow's self-actualized individual.

The power of persuasion is evaluated indirectly in psychology, especially in motivational theory and behavioral analysis. Behaviorist B. F. Skinner helps in understanding the power of persuasion through his discussion of freedom and dignity. The evaluation of environmental contingencies that determine behavior aids in recognizing the power of persuasion. Skinner, however, goes too far in contending that there is no freedom and that all behavior is determined by environmental factors.

Rollo May calls this position one-sided and suggests a middle ground between purely free and purely determined. He likens this tension to that which exists between a person's experience of himself as both subject and object. May's position is in keeping with Whitehead's understanding of actual entities as being both partially determined and partially free. This issue of genuine freedom of the will in hu-

¹Maxie D. Dunnam, Gary J. Herbertson, and Everett L. Shostrom, The Manipulator and the Church (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), Ch. I.

man existence is crucial to understanding the power of persuasion. Only in the context of freedom does persuasion have any real meaning.

The pastoral counselor is often in a position to use the power of actualizing persuasion in order to enhance the freedom of the client. So-called nondirective and forms of directive therapy are helpful in discovering techniques of actualizing persuasion. If properly used, the technique of hypnosis can be employed by the pastoral counselor to help the counselee move toward his own self-appointed goals. This method of therapy traditionally has been seen as manipulative, and yet, the possibilities for actualizing persuasion via this technique is widely recognized.

Chapter II traces the power-of-persuasion idea in theology. Particular attention has been paid to the way in which process theology contributes to our knowledge of divine persuasion. The divine activity is seen as a process of persuasion or, as this writer has suggested, actualizing persuasion. To some extent, the relationship of the power of persuasion as it pertains to liberation theology and to a theology of relinquishment has been demonstrated. God is a God of freedom, and He uses his persuasion to call people to know greater amounts of self-actualization. In the Whiteheadian framework, God in each actual occasion of existence lures people by introducing novelty.

Man is constantly accepting or rejecting the persuasion of God. Ultimately, the rejection of the aims of God leads to enslavement and bondage, and, likewise, the accepting and actualizing of the divine lure leads to freedom. It is not an all-or-nothing thing, for in every moment one makes decisions that determine the quality of one's life.

God's persuasion in one's life, if accepted, can open up new areas of growth

and creativity. In contrast, the negative and often coercive lure of the false gods of success, money, security, prestige, and so forth have, if absolutized, the effect of destroying and maiming one's personal life. The Gospel of Freedom offers exciting possibilities that suggest a life centered in creative-responsive love. In this world, it would often appear that the evil, coercive forces are the most powerful. The Christian faith, however, contends that the most powerful force in the universe is the persuasion known in the suffering love of Jesus Christ.

In the fourth chapter, the integration of the disciplines of psychology and theology, as they relate to the power of persuasion, has been examined. The pastor in his ministering deals with this point of integration in pastoral counseling. Psychologists and theologians have developed their disciplines independently, but there are prominent figures who are working toward integration. Allport, Oates, Frankl, Cobb, and Williams are among those who have made significant contributions to the discussion. The wholistic approach to pastoral counseling helps free the counselee from manipulative persuasion. A critical assessment of the persuasion used in the media also has been undertaken.

As a minister understands the theological and psychological dynamics in the power of persuasion, he will be better able to communicate the message of the Gospel. Increasing insight into the utilization of the power of persuasion in pastoral counseling has been the purpose of this project. The nature of the writer's experience at the California Institution for Women at Frontera demanded the integration of the psychological and the theological in pastoral counseling. The student chaplaincy began a process of integration that has culminated in this Doctor of Ministry project.

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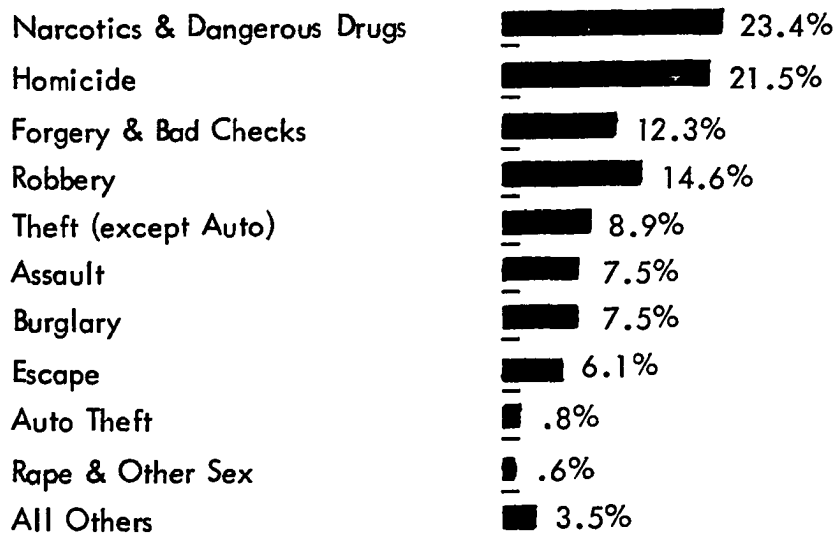
Woelfel, James W. "Listening to B. F. Skinner." Ed. James M. Wall. The Christian Century. (November 30, 1977), 1112-1116.

APPENDIX A

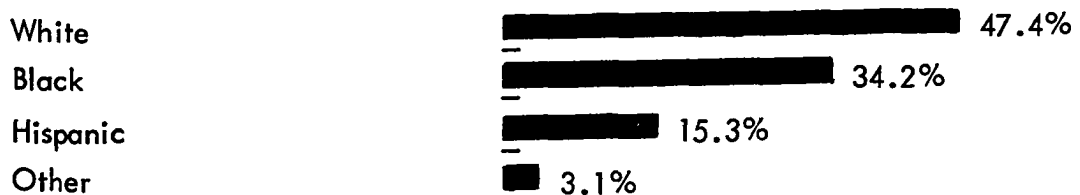
CALIFORNIA INSTITUTION FOR WOMEN
AT FRONTERA

OFFENSE, ETHNIC, AND AGE LEVEL STATISTICS*

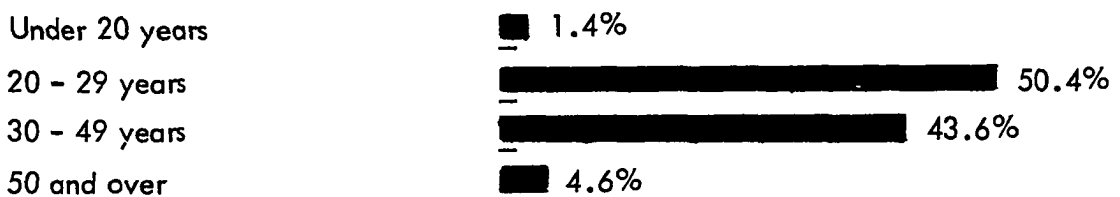
Offense Grouping



Ethnic Grouping



Age Grouping in Years



Median Age: 29.7 years

Median Grade: 8.3

FIGURE I

*As of May 3, 1977

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTION FOR WOMEN AT FRONTERA

RATES OF RECIDIVISM*

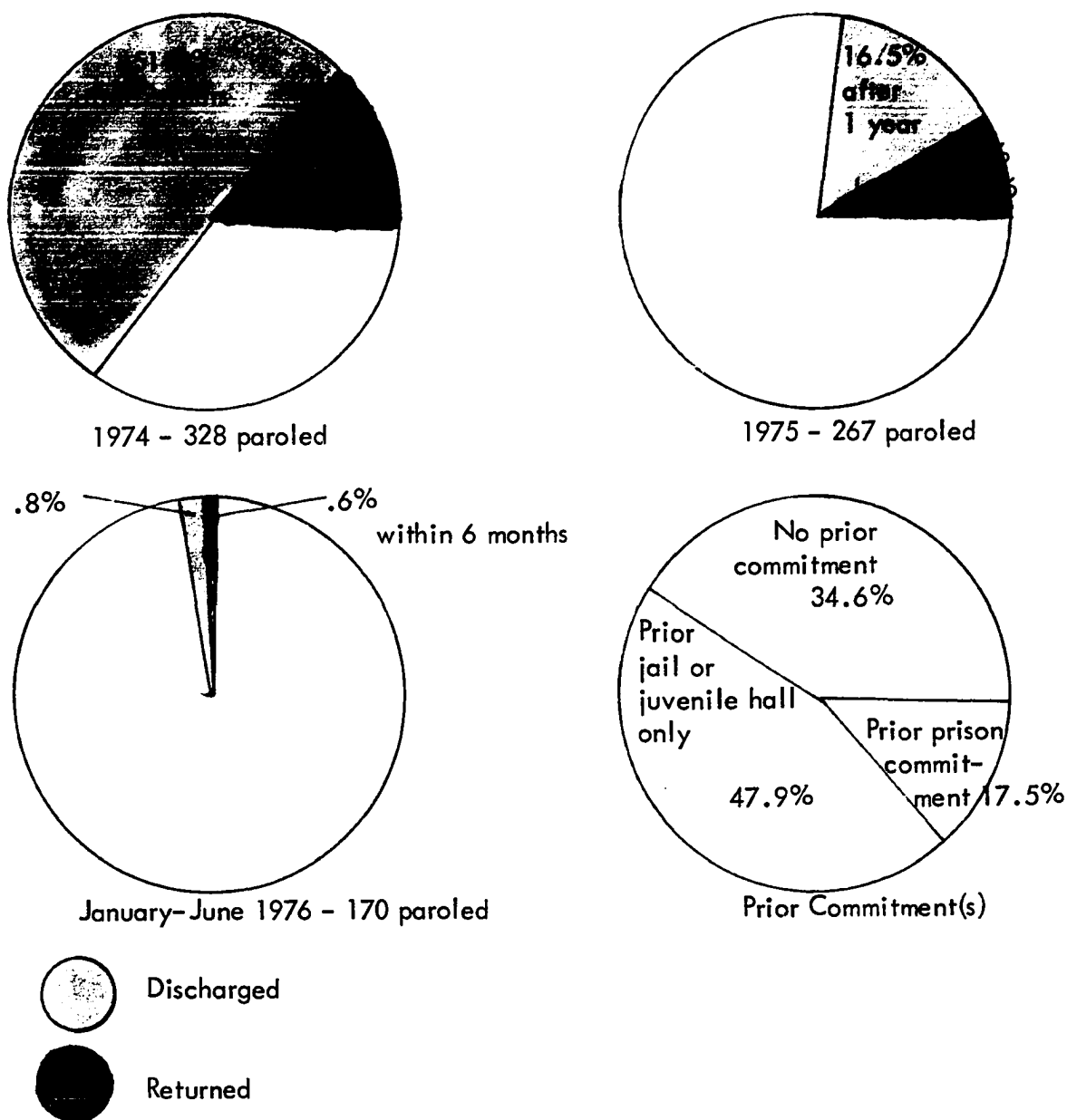


FIGURE II

*As of May 3, 1977

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTION FOR WOMEN
AT FRONTERA

POPULATION AND BUDGET INFORMATION
FOR FISCAL YEAR 1976 - 1977*

Estimated Budget: \$8,456,308

Number of Employees: 329

Projected Population: 775

Ratio of Inmate/Employee: 2.4 to 1

Per Capita Cost: \$10,708

FIGURE III

*As of May 3, 1977

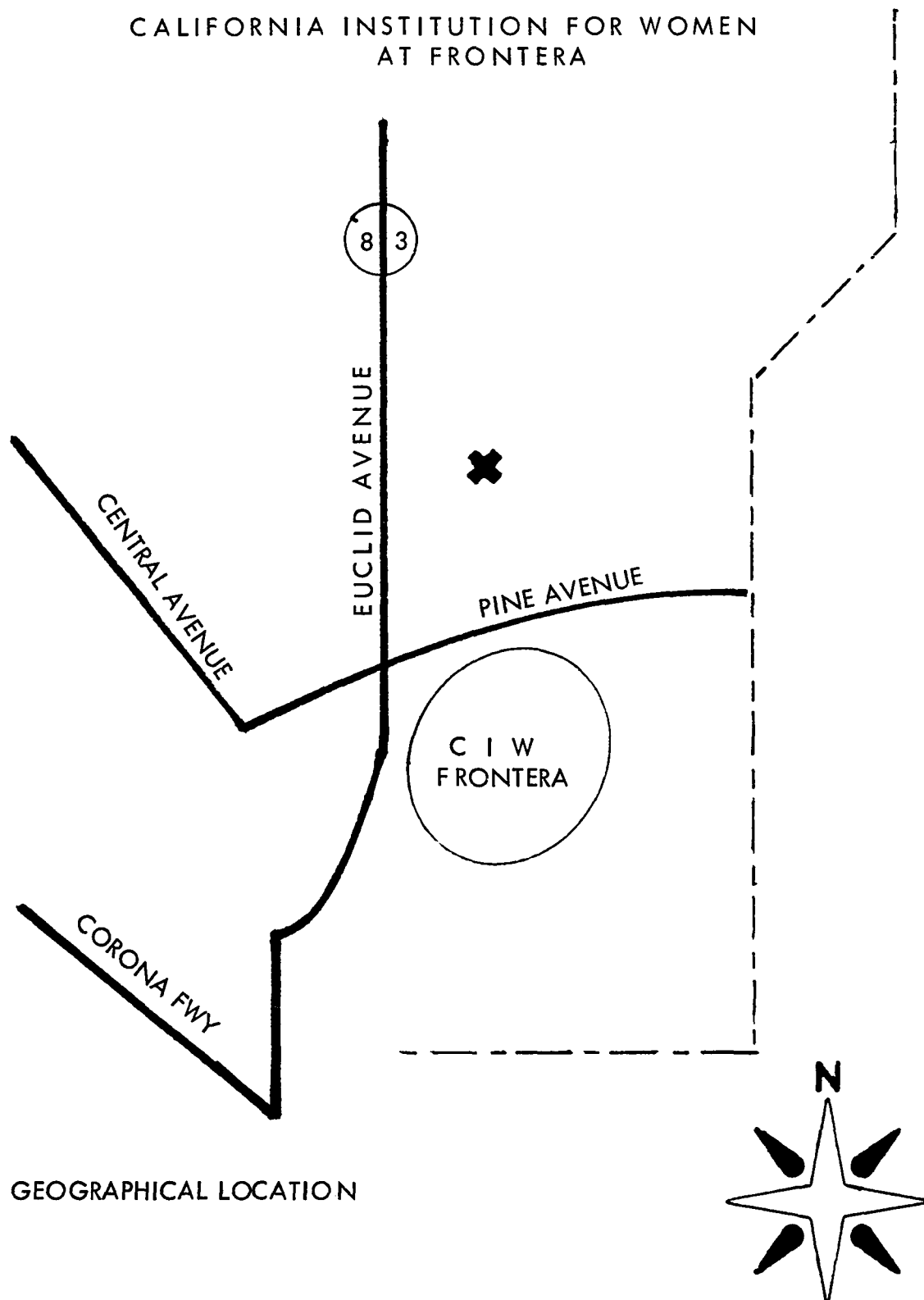


FIGURE IV

APPENDIX B



April 29, 1977

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Around one o'clock in the afternoon, I was in the TV room of the Reception Center. I noticed Betty (name changed) watching a soap opera; she had been to my Bible study group, so I knew her by name. Betty is a good-looking woman with brown hair, about 24 years old. In previous encounters, she had appeared to be rather introverted. At this point, she seemed disinterested and depressed.

CHAPLAIN: You look pretty down right now, Betty.

BETTY (almost unable to speak, tears coming to her eyes): Yes; my husband is going to be sentenced today. In the courtroom I said that I wanted him to go to jail for a long time. I don't want that to happen; I don't want him to have to go through what I am going through right now.

CHAPLAIN: You're going through a lot of pain. (Betty, crying openly, nodded her head in agreement. At this point, I held her hand and moved closer to her.) You feel concerned about your husband and guilty about what you said in the courtroom.

BETTY: I really didn't mean it, but he kept threatening me; and all those sheriffs and deputies were just laughing about the whole thing.

CHAPLAIN: It was in response to your husband's threats and the other laughing that you said that. (Here, I felt that I could be more effective if I could get her away from the TV room and into the Chaplain's Office. She was still crying, and I asked her if she wanted to go into my office. She nodded and said that she would.)

BETTY (after we had settled in the office): I don't care so much about myself, but I do care what this is doing to my children.

CHAPLAIN: You love your children.

BETTY (crying intensely as she spoke of her children): It isn't fair to make them go through this. I am responsible in a lot of ways, and yet, they are the ones that are really suffering.

CHAPLAIN: Uh-huh.

BETTY: I thought that I was going to be out on parole, and I had my kids fly down to the courtroom; then they told me that I was going to go to prison. How do you tell

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your son and daughter that you are not going to be with them?

CHAPLAIN: It was very difficult for you.

BETTY (following a minute's silence as she cried): I got here for aiding and abetting the sexual abuse of these girls. The girls were twelve, thirteen, and fourteen, but these were not like normal girls. The only thing they said about them was how young they were. But these girls would tell their parents that they were going to babysit for the weekend and go spend the weekend with their boyfriends. In the courtroom they kept saying that these girls were the victims. I could not believe that. We even had proof of one of the sexual encounters of the girls, but they would not use it in court.

CHAPLAIN: You feel very hostile toward the girls and the court.

BETTY: Um-hum. I blew up in the courtroom when they kept talking about the girls as if they were normal teenagers. They were the victims. (Still crying.) Do you know what I mean?

CHAPLAIN: You are saying that the girls weren't exactly innocent.

BETTY: Everything got twisted around. Another thing, the probation officer came over and told me to tell the story in my own words; so I did, but in the middle the P.O. asked me if I was gay. I don't know how she got that idea. I told her that I thought that that was sick. (Crying heavily and very upset here.) The probation officer turned out to be a butch, and she gave me a twenty-minute lecture on how it was okay to be gay. That probation officer went into the courtroom and recommended to the judge that I be given the maximum time for the offense. What chance do you have when something like that happens?

CHAPLAIN: You feel really angry at that woman. She gave you a bad report because you told her in effect that she was sick.

BETTY: There is one woman in here who looks a lot like that woman, and I know that I shouldn't, and it is absurd, but I feel a real resentment toward her; I hope that she never comes to talk to me. I know that's ridiculous, but that is the way I feel.

CHAPLAIN: (At this stage, I felt myself believing Betty and felt anger toward that parole officer myself.) The hostile feelings that you have towards the P.O. you are transferring to this woman, but you realize that it is really absurd.

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BETTY: In court, they had this motion picture of my husband and me having sex, and at the end of it there were pictures of these kids having sex. That was not there before, and I wouldn't have asked for the film to be used if I thought that (it) was there. (Crying still.) One of the officers was the godfather of one of the girls, and he had no right to do what he did. He spliced the film and rearranged it so that there were kids having sex throughout the film. How can they do that? (Tears welled anew in her eyes.)

CHAPLAIN: The probation officer and the police officer were both against you.

BETTY: I had no defense. The district attorney made his case against me, and then my defense was nothing. My husband threatened me that if I said anything he would get me.

CHAPLAIN: You were afraid of your husband, afraid of what he might do to you if you told the truth.

BETTY: Yes.

CHAPLAIN: On the one hand, you feel guilty for telling Wendell that you wished he would go to jail for a long time; on the other hand, you feel afraid of your husband.

BETTY: My husband used to beat me up; I have chipped teeth and bruises to prove it. He used to be a boxer, and now he cannot (be one) anymore. He was really unhappy with himself and sort of depressed.

CHAPLAIN: Your husband used to beat you up, but in a way, you can understand that he was very unhappy and took it out on you. You are still very concerned about what happens to him.

BETTY: I hope that he does not get sent to a mental hospital or to jail for a long time.

(Later on in the session....)

CHAPLAIN: I'm not certain how you feel that you had responsibility in this whole situation.

BETTY: There were several points where I made the wrong decisions. I probably should have gone to the parents' home, but I know that I would get a real cussing out

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from at least one of the parents. You see, we started to go out on each other, and the marriage got sick. I met this man Andy, and I was with him for a long time. I would like to marry him, but I could not take being in another marriage like the one that I was in. When Wendell came home he would make some remark about my not doing something, and rather than let it pass, I would get in a big argument with him; he would end up beating me up. If I said anything about the girls who were coming to see him, he would end up beating me up or slapping me around.

CHAPLAIN: You are concerned about what happens to Wendell, but you have another relationship with this man Andy.

BETTY: What really hurts is that I was getting my life straightened up. I was going to church, and I had a good relationship with the kids. Then this charge was made, and everything went down the tubes.

CHAPLAIN: That's what really hurts. (Betty was still crying. After some further conversation, I realized that it was time to start my rap group with other inmates.) How do you feel right now?

BETTY: I feel better. (A pause.) I called my dad and tried to talk to him, but he just said, "You'll have to grow up." (Crying again.) I said, "Okay, thanks a lot, Dad." (Very upset.) My mom is very religious, and she prays a lot; but it seems like she is never there when I need her. She is always out getting some groceries when I call.

CHAPLAIN: It's almost like you feel deserted and alone.

BETTY: I need someone to pray for me.

CHAPLAIN: I would like to pray for you right now. (Betty closed her eyes and I took her hand.) Lord, this woman Betty is going through a lot of pain right now. She loves her children very much and is concerned about them. Enable them to feel the love that she has for them. Strengthen Betty and help her to feel the love that You have for her. Amen. Betty, I am concerned about you. I would like you to feel that you can come and talk to me on a regular basis. You have been through a lot, and you have feelings of guilt, concern, and hostility. I would like to be with you in this somehow, and I hope that you can gain strength from the times that we meet together. If you would like, you can go to this rap group that I will be having. (She

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went to the group, seemed to respond well in the group, and had apparently changed her mood quite a bit.)

SUMMARIZING COMMENT: It is hoped that in future encounters Betty will be able to see more of her own responsibility for the predicament that she finds herself in. Although, at times, I do feel that she was given a bum deal over all, she seemed to contribute to a bad situation. I find myself empathizing with her and liking her but feeling that she needs to see herself as less a victim. This was fruitful in terms of the tremendous energy release that occurred for Betty. I found myself somewhat drained after that session and not eager to have another group. The group, however, did go well.